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TALES IN VERSE.

BY

MARY HOWITT.

NEW YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,

82 CLIFF STREET.

1847.

THE NEW YORK
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PREFACE.

PERHAPS some of my young readers may be tempted to turn critical, and say that some of the pieces in this volume are not strictly entitled to the name of tales; I think it best, therefore, to plead guilty at once, and explain that the title was adopted as the most simple, and, at the same time, sufficiently expressive of the bulk of the contents. Indeed, the whole of the prose volume which is to succeed this, I believe, consists of tales; and the poems in this volume which are not literally stories, will, I hope, find such favor in the eyes of my young friends, that they shall not deem them unfitting companions to the best tales amongst them.

I can wish no better for my kind young readers, so far as the book is concerned, than that it may become as popular amongst them as the Sketches of Natural History which I wrote for them some time ago, and a second volume of which I hope to offer them before long.

Nottingham, June 10th, 1836

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OLDEN TIMES.

DEDICATED, WITH MUCH RESPECT, TO JUVENILE ANTIQUARIANS.

THE fields with corn are rich and deep,
Which only he who sows can reap;
And in old woodlands' grassy lea
Are cattle grazing peacefully;
And hamlet-homes in valleys low
Fear neither famine, fire, nor foe.
A thousand busy towns are rife
With prosperous sounds of trade and life,
And bustling crowds are in the streets,
Where man is friend with all he meets.
No need is there of city-wall,
Nor gates to shut at evening-fall;
For, know ye not, the land I praise
Is England in *these* happy days?
It was not thus in wood and wold, —
It was not thus in times of old;
Where waves the corn, the red fern bowed
On heathy turf that ne'er was ploughed;
And boundless tracts were covered o'er
With mossy bog and barren moor;

The green hill-slopes, the pastoral lea,
Were shadowed by the forest-tree;
And herds of deer, of nought afraid,
Went bounding through the greenwood shade;
And, 'mong the leafy boughs above,
Loud screamed the jay, and cooed the dove;
The squirrel sprung from tree to tree,
The timid badger gamboled free,
And the red fox barked dismally;
And the grim wolf, at close of day,
Made the lone mountain herds his prey.
Then fasts were held, and prayers were said,
When knight or yeoman journeyed,
For peril great was on the road,
Where'er a daring traveller trode;
And ever as they came or went,
Before the wayside cross they bent,
Their beads to tell, their prayers to say,
And crave protection for the way.
Yet, save when quiet woodmen passed
Silently through the forest vast;
Or hermit stole from out his cell,
Down to some holy wayside well;
Or portly monk, in habit gray,
And long black cowl, rode by the way;
Or pilgrim went with staff in hand,
To some famed shrine across the land,—
But rarely man had man in view,
For travellers in this land were few.
Yet, at times, upon the breeze was borne
The gallant sound of hunter's horn;

And barons from their halls came forth,
With leashed hounds and sounds of mirth;
And dames in quaint, embroidered dresses,
And hooded hawks with bells and jesses;
With yeomen bold, a thousand strong,
Careered right gallantly along.
And at times, stout men, like Robin Hood,
With outlawed dwellers of the wood,
With their merry men, clad all in green,
A hunting in the woods were seen.

Not then each golden harvest-field
Was reaped for him whose toil had tilled;
Little was recked of cruel wrong —
The weak man labored for the strong;
And civil war fierce ruin wrought,
And battles, many a one, were fought;
And the old remnants of the slain
Moulder on hill, and heath, and plain.
Then, learning was of little note,
And, saving monks, none read or wrote;
And even kings, with nought of shame,
Confessed they could not sign their name!
Then ladies' lives were dull, for they
Wrought tapestry-work from day to day;
And peasant-women, brown with toil,
Tilled with the men the barren soil.
Then towns were few, and small, and lone,
Enclosed with massy walls of stone;
And at each street an outer gate,
To shut before the day grew late;

And not a lamp might give its light,
After the curfew rung at night.
And if perchance it happened so
That a traveller came on journey slow,
In scarlet cloak and leathern belt,
And high-crowned hat of sable felt,
And huge jack-boots, and iron spur,
Riding, the king's grave messenger,
How stared the townsfolk, half aghast,
As solemnly he onward passed
To the low hostel, built of wood!
And how in wondering groups they stood,
With questionings poured out amain,
To see him journey forth again!

Another day of blither cheer
Might come, some three times in the year,
When the customed traders came with packs
Of needful things on horses' backs;
With jingling bells to the leader's rein,
Sounding afar on the narrow lane;—
A long array of near a score,
With armed riders on before;
And the men of trade, with visage thin,
In travelling caps of badger skin,
And rough, huge cloaks, and ponderous gear
Of arms and trappings closed the rear.
On went they, guests of special grace,
On to the little market-place;—
And quickly might be purchased there,
From the Sheffieldman, his cutler-ware;

And winter garb, and woollen vest,
From the sturdy weaver of the West;
And scarlet hose, and 'broidered shoon,
And wooden bowl, and horny spoon;
Buckles, and belts, and caps of hide,
And a thousand other things beside,
Till the townsfolk had laid in their store,
And the traders could sell nothing more.
Then, at dawn of day, the sober train
Set out upon their way again;
Travelling on by dale and down,
Warily to some distant town, —
Or to some dark, gray castle, tall,
Guarded with drawbridge, moat, and wall;
With porter stern, and bloodhounds grim,
With towers of strength, and dungeons dim;
Where minstrels stood with pipes to play,
And a jester jibed the livelong day; —
Or to halt in some green vale before
The monastery's Gothic door,
To meekly ask, with speaking eye,
What the lord abbot chose to buy —
Or ermine soft, or linen fine,
Or precious flasks of foreign wine?

Thus was it in the days of old
Men lived, and thus they bought and sold:
Sordid, and ignorant, and poor,
Was baron bold and churlish boor.
'Tis well for ye your days are cast
When ignorance, like a cloud, has passed,

And God has showered his blessings down
On wood and wild, in tower and town,
And all in peace and plenty dwell;
And so thank Heaven, — and fare-ye-well!

MADAM FORTESCUE AND HER CAT.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THREE PICTURES, DESIGNED AND DRAWN BY ANNA MARY HOWITT, FOR HER BROTHER CLAUDE

PART I.

Within this picture you may view
The Cat and Madam Fortescue —
And very soon you will discover
That Mistress Pussy "lived in clover."

THIS is a nice pleasant parlor,
As you may see in a minute;
It belongs to Madam Fortescue,
And there she sits in it.

That's the dear old lady,
In a green tabby gown,
And a great lace cap,
With long lace ruffles hanging down.

There she sits
In a cushioned, high-backed seat,
Covered over with crimson damask,
With a footstool at her feet.

You see what a handsome room it is,
Full of old carving and gilding;
The house is, one may be sure,
Of the Elizabethan style of building.

It is a pleasant place;
And through the window one sees
Into old-fashioned gardens
Full of old yew-trees.

And on that table, — that funny table,
With the curious thin legs, —
Stand little tea-cups, a china jar,
And great ostrich eggs.

One can see in a moment,
That she is very rich indeed;
With nothing to do, all day long,
But sit in a chair and read.

And those are very antique chairs,
So heavy and so strong;
The seats are tent-stitch, the lady's work,
All done when she was young.

And that's Mr. Fortescue's portrait,
  That hangs there on the wall,
In the thunder-and-lightning coat,
  The bag-wig and all.

Very old-fashioned and stately,
  With a sword by his side;
But 't is many a long year now,
  Since the old gentleman died.

Thus you see the room complete,
  With a Turkey carpet on the floor;
And get a peep into other rooms
  Through that open door.

But the chiefest thing of all
  We have yet passed over —
The tortoise-shell cat, which our motto says
  "Now lives in clover" —

Meaning she has nothing to do,
  All the long year through,
But sleep and take her meals
  With good Madam Fortescue.

Only look; on that crimson cushion,
  How soft and easy she lies,
Just between sleep and wake,
  With half buttoned-up eyes!

And good Madam Fortescue,
  She lifts her eyes from her book,
To see if she want any thing,
  And to give her a loving look.

But now turn your eyes
  Behind this great Indian screen; —
There sits Madam Fortescue's woman,
  Very crabbed and very lean.

She makes believe to her lady,
  To be very fond of the cat;
But she hates her,
  And pinches when she pretends to pat.

But the lady never knows it,
  For the cat can but mew;
She can tell no tales, however ill-used,
  And that Mrs. Crabthorn knew.

So she smiled, and was smooth-spoken,
  And the lady said, "Crabthorn,
You are the best waiting-woman
  That ever was born!

"And when I die, good Crabthorn,
  In my will it shall appear,
That my cat I leave to you,
  And fifty pounds a year.

"For I certainly think, Crabthorn,
You will love her for my sake!"
"That I shall!" said the waiting-woman,
"And all my pleasure will she make!"

Now all this has been said and done
This very day, I am sure—
For there lies the lady's will,
Tied up with red tape secure.

PART II.

"New men, new measures," as 'tis said;
Now Madam Fortescue is dead—
And the poor Cat, as we shall shew,
In little time doth suffer woe.

Now comes the second picture;
And here we shall discover,
That the poor pussy now
No longer lives in clover.

For she gets no sups of cream,—
Not even a crumb of bread;
Cross Mrs. Crabthorn rules the house,
Now Madam Fortescue is dead.

And the fine crimson cushion
Into the lumber-room is thrown.
Only look at that poor cat;
She would melt a heart of stone.

She may well look so forlorn,
Poor creature! that she may;
And only think what kicks she's had,
And nothing to eat all day!

This, then, is the dressing-room,
Grand and stately as you see;
Yet every thing in the room
Looks as solemn as can be!

The very peacock's feathers,
Over the old glass on the wall,
Look like great mourning plumes
Waving at a funeral; —

And that glass in the black frame;
And the footstool on the floor;
And the chair where Madam sate to dress,
But where she'll sit no more! —

Every thing looks as if some
Great sorrow would befall!
See, there's the old tabby gown
Hanging on the wall; —

And there's the lace cap, —
  But there's no lace border on it;
And in that half-open box
  Is the dear old lady's bonnet; —

And there lie the black silk mits,
  And the funny high-heeled shoes;
And there the pomatum-pot,
  And the powder-puffs she used to use; —

But she will never use them more,
  Neither to-day nor to-morrow!
She is dead — and gone from this world,
  As the cat knows to her sorrow!

But now, through that open door,
  If you take a peep,
You see the great stately bed
  On which she used to sleep; —

And there rests her coffin
  On that very stately bed;
For you must clearly understand
  That Madam Fortescue is dead!

See, now, in this dressing-room,
  There sits the poor cat;
Could you have thought a few days
  Would make a change like that?

See, how woe-begone she looks —
In what miserable case!
I really think I see the tears
All running down her face!

She has reason enough to cry, poor thing!
She has had a great loss!
She had a mistress, the best in the world;
She has one now — so cross!

There she sits trembling,
And hanging down her head,
As if she knew misfortune was come,
Now Madam Fortescue is dead!

And look; there stands Mrs. Crabthorn,
With a rope in her hand,
Giving to that surly fellow
A very strict command.

For what? to hang the cat!
"For then, Scroggin," says she,
"I shall still have my fifty pounds a-year:
And what's the cat to me?

'To be sure, I promised Madam
To love the cat like a relation;
But now she is dead and gone,
Why that's no signification!

" And cats I never could bear,
And I'll not be plagued with that;
So take this new rope, Scroggin,
And see you hang the cat!

" Be sure to do it safely;
Hang her with the rope double;
And her skin will make you a cap,
Friend Scroggin, for your trouble!"

Poor thing, she hears their words—
Well may she moan and sob;
He is an ill-looking fellow,
And seems to like the job!

He will take the rope with joy;
He's no pity — not he!
And in less than half-an-hour,
She 'll be hanging on a tree!

PART III.

Now in this third part you will see
The end of Crabthorn's treachery;
How she had cause to rue the day
Whereon the Cat was made away.

See, now, my dear brother,
This is the great dining-hall,
Where the company is assembled
After the funeral.

It is a very noble room;
But, now we cannot stay,
We must look at the old wainscot
And the pictures some other day.

See, here sits the company,
The heir and all the cousins;
The nephews and the grand-nephews,
And the nieces by dozens.

And there is the lawyer
Reading the lady's will:
For an hour they've sat listening,
All of them, stock still.

The lawyer he has just reached
To where the will said,
" Mrs. Crabthorn shall have fifty pounds
A-year, till the cat be dead.

" That fifty pounds a-year
Shall be left to her to keep
The cat in good condition,
With a cushion whereon to sleep; —

" That as long as the cat live,
The money shall be her due."
And the old lady prayed her, in her will,
To be a loving guardian and true.

" Goodness me!" screamed Mrs. Crabthorn;
" The cat's dead, I do declare!
Who thought that Madam meant the money
Only for the cat's share?

" Lawk sirs, she loved my lady
More than all the world beside;
And so, like any Christian,
She took to her bed and died!

" She died of grief for my lady,
On the third day, and no other!"
" You shall not be forgotten, Crabthorn!"
Said good Madam Fortescue's brother.

And with that up jumps Scroggin, —
You see where he stands, —
Dangling the very rope
In his great, rough hands.

And moreover than that,
To make it past a doubt,
There's the cat-skin in his pocket,
Which he will presently pull out.

And he tells all the company
Assembled there that day,
How Crabthorn had misused the cat,
And had her made away.

Now, if you inquire of me
Why her death he did not smother,
I can only say, bad people
Often betray one another.

And I can very well suppose
They have quarrelled since that day,
And now, to be revenged on her,
He determines to betray.

But you see how angry she is;
How her face is in a blaze;
But she deserved her disappointment,
And so every one says.

And now remember this,
My dear little brother —
Never be unkind or cruel
To one thing or another.

For nobody knows how sorely
They may have cause to repent;
And always, sooner or later,
There comes a punishment!

ANDREW LEE.

THE FISHER BOY.

Ah! Fisher Boy, I well know thee;
Brother thou art to Marion Lee!
What, didst thou think I knew thee not?
Couldst thou believe I had forgot?
For shame, for shame! what! I forget
The treasures of thy laden net!
And how we went one day together,
One day of showery summer weather,
Up the sea-shore, and for an hour
Stood sheltering from a pelting shower,
Within an upturned, ancient boat,
That had not been for years afloat!
No, no, my boy! I liked too well
The old sea-stories thou didst tell;
I liked too well thy roguish eye—
Thy merry speech — thy laughter sly;
Thy old sea-jacket, to forget, —
And then the treasures of thy net!

O Andrew! thou hast not forgot,
I'm very sure that thou hast not,

All that we talked about that day,
Of famous countries far away!
Of Crusoes in their islands lone,
That never were, nor will be known,
And yet this very moment stand
Upon some point of mountain land,
Looking out o'er the desert sea,
If chance some coming ship there be.
Thou know'st we talked of this — thou know'st
We talked about a ship-boy's ghost —
A wretched little orphan lad
Who served a master stern and bad,
And had no friend to take his part,
And perished of a broken heart;
Or by his master's blows, some said,
For in the boat they found him dead,
And the boat's side was stained and red!

And then we talked of many a heap
Of ancient treasure in the deep,
And the great serpent that some men,
In far-off seas, meet now and then;
Of grand sea-palaces that shine
Through forests of old coralline;
And wondrous creatures that may dwell
In many a crimson Indian shell;
Till I shook hands with thee, to see
Thou wast a poet — Andrew Lee!
Though thou wast guiltless all the time
Of putting any thoughts in rhyme.

Ah, little fisher boy! since then,
Ladies I've seen and learned men,
All clever, and some great and wise,
Who study all things, earth and skies,
Who much have seen and much have read,
And famous things have writ and said;
But, Andrew, never have I heard
One who so much my spirit stirred
As he who sate with me an hour,
Screened from the pelting thunder-shower —
Now laughing in his merry wit;
Now talking in a serious fit,
In speech that poured like water free;
And that was thou — poor Andrew Lee!

Then shame to think I knew thee not —
Thou hast not, nor have I forgot;
And long 'twill be ere I forget
How thou took'st up thy laden net,
And gave me all that it contained,
Because I, too, thy heart had gained!

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

THERE was a girl of fair Provence,
  Fresh as a flower in May,
Who 'neath a spreading plane-tree sate,
  Upon a summer-day,
And thus unto a mourner young,
  In a low voice, did say: —

"And, said I, I shall dance no more;
  For, though but young in years,
I knew what makes men wise and sad —
  Affection's ceaseless fears,
And that dull aching of the heart
  Which is not eased by tears.

"But sorrow will not always last;
  Heaven keeps our griefs in view;
Mine is a simple tale, dear friend,
  Yet I will tell it you;
A simple tale of household grief,
  And household gladness too.

"My father in the battle died,
  And left young children three;
My brother Marc, a noble lad,

With spirit bold and free,
More kind than common brothers are;
And Isabel and me.

"When Marc was sixteen summers old,
A tall youth and a strong,
Said he, 'I am a worthless drone;
I do my mother wrong;
I'll hence and win the bread I eat;
I've burdened you too long!'

"O! many tears my mother shed;
And earnestly did pray,
That he would still abide with us,
And be the house's stay;
And be like morning to her eyes,
As he had been alway.

"But Marc he had a steadfast will,
A purpose fixed and good,
And calmly still and manfully
Her prayers he long withstood;
Until at length she gave consent,
Less willing than subdued.

"Twas on a shining morn in June,
He rose up to depart;
I dared not to my mother show
The sadness of my heart;
We said farewell, and yet farewell,
As if we could not part.

"There seemed a gloom within the house,
Although the bright sun shone;
There was a want within our hearts;
For he, the dearest one,
Had said farewell that morn of June,
And from our sight was gone.

"At length most doleful tidings came,
Sad tidings of dismay;
The plague was in the distant town,
And hundreds died each day;
We thought, in truth, poor Marc would die
Mid strangers far away.

"Weeks passed, and months, and not a word
Came from him to dispel
The almost certainty of death
Which o'er our spirits fell:
My mother drooped from fears, which grew
Each day more terrible.

"At length said she, 'I'll see my son,
In life if yet he be,
Or else the turf that covers him!'
When sank she on her knee,
And clasped her hands in silent prayer,
And wept most piteously.

"She went into the distant town,
Still asking every where
For tidings of her long-lost son:—

In vain she made her prayer;
All were so full of woe themselves,
No pity had they to spare.

"To hear her tell that tale would move
The sternest heart to bleed;
She was a stranger in that place,
Yet none of her took heed;
And broken-hearted she came back,
A bowed and bruised reed.

"I marked her cheek yet paler grow,
More sunken yet her eye;
And to my soul assurance came
That she was near to die;
And hourly was my earnest prayer
Put up for her on high.

"O, what a woe seemed then to us,
The friendless orphan's fate!
I dared not picture to my mind
How drear, how desolate;
But, like a frightened thing, my heart
Shrunk from a pang so great!

"We rarely left my mother's side;
'Twas joy to touch her hand,
And with unwearying, patient love,
Beside her couch to stand,
To wait on her, and every wish
Unspoke to understand.

"At length, — O joy beyond all joys! —
When we believed him dead,
One calm and sunny afternoon,
As she lay on her bed
In quiet sleep, methought below
I heard my brother's tread.

"I rose, and on the chamber stair
I met himself — no other —
More beautiful than ere before,
My tall and manly brother!
I should have swooned, but for the thought
Of my poor sleeping mother.

"I cannot tell you how we met; —
I could not speak for weeping;
Nor had I words enough for joy;
My heart within seemed leaping;
I should have screamed, but for the thought
Of her who there lay sleeping!

"That Marc returned in joy to us,
My mother dreamed e'en then,
And that prepared her for the bliss
Of meeting him again; —
To tell how great that bliss would need
The tongue of wisest men!

"His lightest tone, his very step,
More power had they to win
My drooping mother back to life,

Than every medicine;
She rose again, like one revived
From death where he had been!

"The story that my brother told
Was long, and full of joy:
Scarce to the city had he come,
A poor and friendless boy,
Than he chanced to meet a merchant good,
From whom he asked employ.

"The merchant was a childless man;
And in my brother's face,
Something he saw that moved his heart
To such unusual grace;
'My son,' said he, 'is dead; wilt thou
Supply to me his place?'

"Even then, bound to the golden East,
His ship before him lay;
And this new bond of love was formed
There, standing on the quay.
My brother went on board with him,
And sailed that very day.

"The letter that he wrote to us,
It never reached our hand;
And while we drooped with anxious love,
He gained the Indian strand,
And saw a thousand wondrous things,
In that old, famous land.

"And many rich and curious things,
Bright bird and pearly shell,
He brought, as if to realize
The tales he had to tell.
My mother smiled, and wept, and smiled,
And listened, and grew well.

"The merchant loved him more and more,
And did a father's part;
And blessed my brother for the love
That healed his wounded heart.
He was a friend that Heaven had sent
Kind mercy to impart.

"So do not droop, my gentle friend,
Though grief may burden sore;
Look up to God, for he hath love
And comfort in great store,
And ofttimes moveth human hearts
To bless us o'er and o'er."

A SWINGING SONG.

Merry it is, on a summer's day,
All through the meadows to wend away:
To watch the brooks glide fast or slow,
And the little fish twinkle down below;
To hear the lark in the blue sky sing,
O, sure enough, 'tis a merry thing;—
But 'tis merrier far to swing—to swing!

Merry it is, on a winter's night,
To listen to tales of elf and sprite,
Of caves and castles so dim and old,—
The dismalest tales that ever were told;—
And then to laugh, and then to sing,
You may take my word is a merry thing,—
But 'tis merrier far to swing—to swing!

Down with the hoop upon the green;
Down with the ringing tambourine;—
Little heed we for this or for that;
Off with the bonnet, off with the hat!
Away we go like birds on the wing!
Higher yet! higher yet! "Now for the King!"
This is the way we swing—we swing!

Scarcely the bough bends, Claude is so light, —
Mount up behind him — there, that is right!
Down bends the branch now! — swing him away;
Higher yet! higher yet! higher, I say!
O, what a joy it is! Now let us sing,
" A pear for the Queen — an apple for the King! "
And shake the old tree as we swing — we swing!

ELLEN MORE.

"Sweet Ellen More," said I, "come forth
Beneath the sunny sky;
Why stand you musing all alone,
With such an anxious eye?
What is it, child, that aileth you?"
And thus she made reply:—

"The fields are green, the skies are bright,
The leaves are on the tree,
And 'mong the sweet flowers of the thyme
Far flies the honey-bee;
And the lark hath sung since morning prime,
And merrily singeth he.

"Yet not for this shall I go forth
On the open hills to play;
There's not a bird that singeth now,
Would tempt me hence to stray;—
I would not leave our cottage-door
For a thousand flowers to-day!"

"And why?" said I; "what is there here,
Beside your cottage-door,
To make a merry girl like you

Thus idly stand to pore?
There is a mystery in this thing, —
Now tell me, Ellen More!"

The fair girl looked into my face,
With her dark and serious eye;
Silently awhile she looked,
Then heaved a quiet sigh;
And, with a half-reluctant will,
Again she made reply: —

"Three years ago, unknown to us,
When nuts were on the tree,
Even in the pleasant harvest-time,
My brother went to sea —
Unknown to us, to sea he went,
And a woful house were we.

"That winter was a weary time,
A long, dark time of woe;
For we knew not in what ship he sailed,
And vainly sought to know;
And day and night the loud, wild winds
Seemed evermore to blow.

"My mother lay upon her bed,
Her spirit sorely tossed
With dismal thoughts of storm and wreck
Upon some savage coast;
But morn and eve we prayed to Heaven
That he might not be lost.

"And when the pleasant spring came on,
And fields again were green,
He sent a letter full of news,
Of the wonders he had seen;
Praying us to think him dutiful
As he afore had been.

"The tidings that came next were from
A sailor old and gray,
Who saw his ship at anchor lie
In the harbor at Bombay;
But he said my brother pined for home,
And wished he were away.

"Again he wrote a letter long,
Without a word of gloom;
And soon, and very soon, he said,
He should again come home;—
I watched, as now, beside the door,
And yet he did not come.

"I watched and watched, but I knew not then
It would be all in vain;
For very sick he lay the while,
In a hospital in Spain.—
Ah me. I fear my brother dear
Will ne'er come home again!

"And now I watch—for we have heard
That he is on his way;
And the letter said, in very truth,

He would be here to-day.
O! there 's no bird that singeth now,
Could tempt me hence away!"

— That self-same eve I wandered down
Unto the busy strand,
Just as a little boat came in
With people to the land;
And 'mongst them was a sailor-boy,
Who leaped upon the sand.

I knew him by his dark-blue eyes,
And by his features fair;
And as he leapt ashore, he sang
A simple Scottish air, —
'There's nae place like our ain dear hame
To be met wi' ony where!'

A DAY OF DISASTERS.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN PETER AND ZEDEKIAH.

PETER. — Zedekiah, come here!
ZEDEKIAH. — Well now, what's the matter?
PETER. — Look at my hat; the more I set it right,
it only gets the flatter.
ZEDEKIAH. — Why, Peter, what's come to your
hat? I never saw such a thing.
PETER. — I've had nothing but ill-luck to-day; I
did this with the swing;
I've been tossed into the apple-tree just as if I was
a ball,
And though I caught hold of a bough, I've had a
terrible fall;
I'm sure I should have cracked my skull, had it
not been for my hat.
You may see what a fall it was, for the crown's
quite flat;
And it never will take its shape again, do all that
ever I may!
ZEDEKIAH. — Never mind it, Peter! Put it on
your head, and come along, I say!

PETER. — Nay, I shall not. I shall sit down under this tree;
I've had nothing but ill-luck to-day. Come, sit down by me,
And I'll tell you all, Zedekiah, for I feel quite forlorn;
O dear! O dear! I'm lamed now! — I've sate down upon a thorn!
ZEDEKIAH. — Goodness' sake! Peter, be still — what a terrible bellow!
One would think you'd sate on a hornet's nest; sit down, my good fellow.
PETER. — I'll be sure there are no more thorns here, before I sit down;
Pretty well of one thorn at a time, Master Zedekiah Brown!
There, now, I think this seat is safe and easy — so now you must know
I was fast asleep at breakfast-time; and you'll always find it so,
That if you begin a day ill, it will be ill all the day.
Well, when I woke, the breakfast-things were clattering all away;
And I know they had eggs and fowl, and all sort of good things;
But then none may partake who are in bed when the morning bell rings;
So, sadly vexed as I was, I rolled myself round in bed,
And "As breakfast is over, I'll not hurry myself," I said;

So I just got into a nice little doze, when in came my mother;
And "For shame, Peter," she said, "to be abed now! well, you can't go with your brother!"
Then out of the door she went, without another word;
And just then a sound of wheels, and of pawing horses' hoofs I heard;
So I jumped up to the window to see what it was; and I declare
There was a grand party of fine folks setting off somewhere:
There was my brother, mounted on the pony so sleek and brown;
And Bell in her white frock, and my mother in her satin gown;
And my father in his best, and two gentlemen beside;
And I had never heard a word about it, either of drive or ride!
I really think it was very queer of them to set off in that way:
If I'd only known over-night, I'd have been up by break of day!
As you may think, I was sadly vexed; but I did not choose to show it;
So I whistled as I came down stairs, that the servants might not know it;
Then I went into the yard, and called the dog by his name,

For I thought if they were gone, he and I might have a good game;
But I called and called, and there was no dog either in this place or th' other;
And Thomas said, "Master Peter, Neptune's gone with your brother."
Well, as there was no dog, I went to look for the fox,
And sure enough the chain was broke, and there was no creature in the box;
But where the fellow was gone nobody could say;
He had broken loose himself, I suppose, and so had slipped away;
I would give any thing I have but to find the fox again —
And was it not provoking, Zedekiah, to lose him just then?

ZEDEKIAH. — Provoking enough! Well, Peter, and what happened next?

PETER. — Why, when I think of it now, it makes me quite vexed;
I went into the garden, just to look about
To see if the green peas were ready, or the scarlet lychnis come out;
And there, what should I clap my eyes on but the old sow,
And seven little pigs making a pretty row!
And of all places in the world, as if for very spite,
They had gone into my garden, and spoiled and ruined it quite!

The old sow, she had grubbed up my rosemary and old-man by the root,
And my phlox, and my sunflowers, and my hollyhocks, that were black as soot;
And every flower that I set store on was ruined forever;
I never was so mortified in all my life — never!
ZEDEKIAH. — You sent them off, I should think, with a famous swither!
PETER. — Grunting and tumbling one over the other, I cared not whither.
Well, as I was just then standing, grieving over the ruin,
I heard Thomas call, "Master Peter, come and see what the rats have been doing —
They've eaten all the guinea-pigs' heads off!"
ZEDEKIAH. — O Peter, was it true?
PETER. — Away I ran, not knowing what in the world to do! —
And there — I declare it makes me quite shudder to the bone —
Lay all my pretty little guinea-pigs as dead as a stone!
"It's no manner of use," says Thomas, "setting traps; for you see
They no more care for a trap, than I do for a pea;
I'll lay my life on't, there are twenty rats now down in that hole,
And we can no more reach 'em than an underground mole!"

I declare, Zedekiah, I never passed such a day before — not I;
It makes me quite low-spirited, till I'm ready to cry.
All those pretty guinea-pigs! and I've nothing left at all,
Only the hawk, and I've just set his cage on the wall.

ZEDEKIAH. — Hush! hush, now! for Thomas is saying something there.

PETER. — What d'ye say, Thomas?

THOMAS. — The hawk's soaring in the air!
The cage-door was open, and he's flown clean away!

PETER. — There now, Zedekiah, is it not an unfortunate day?
I've lost all my favorites — I've nothing left at all,
And my garden is spoiled, and I've had such a dreadful fall!
I wish I had been up this morning as early as the sun,
And then I should have gone to Canonley, nor have had all this mischief done!
I'm sure it's quite enough to make me cry for a year —
Let's go into the house, Zedekiah; what's the use of sitting here?

THE YOUNG MOURNER.

Leaving her sports, in pensive tone,
'Twas thus a fair young mourner said ·
"How sad we are now we're alone!
I wish my mother were not dead!

"I can remember she was fair;
And how she kindly looked and smiled,
When she would fondly stroke my hair,
And call me her beloved child.

"Before my mother went away,
You never sighed as now you do;
You used to join us at our play,
And be our merriest playmate too.

"Father, I can remember when
I first observed her sunken eye,
And her pale, hollow cheek; and then
I told my brother she would die!

"And the next morn they did not speak,
But led us to her silent bed;
They bade us kiss her icy cheek,
And told us she indeed was dead!

"O, then I thought how she was kind,
My own beloved and gentle mother!
And calling all I knew to mind,
I thought there ne'er was such another!

"Poor little Charles, and I! that day
We sate within our silent room;
But we could neither read nor play,—
The very walls seemed full of gloom.

"I wish my mother had not died;
We never have been glad since then;
They say, and is it true," she cried,
"That she can never come again?"

The father checked his tears, and thus
He spake: "My child, they do not err,
Who say she cannot come to us;
But you and I may go to her.

"Remember your dear mother still,
And the pure precepts she has given;
Like her, be humble, free from ill,
And you shall see her face in heaven!"

THE BEAR AND THE BAKERS.

A TRUE STORY.

In the old town in which I live,
The event occurred of which I mean to speak;
To know what town that is, ye need not seek;
No further information shall I give.
In this town is an annual fair,
Such as, I will be bound to say,
May not be met with every where.
Then all the people look extremely gay,
And all the children have a holiday:
Then there are cows, and sheep, and pigs to sell,
And more than I can tell;
And booths are ranged in rows,
Full of all sorts of pretty things,
Glass necklaces, and copper rings,
And pins, and gloves, and bracelets, combs, and boxes;
And then there are such quantities of shows,
All crammed with lions, elephants, and foxes!
And for the little people, dolls and balls,
Horses and coaches, whips and penny trumpets;
And many different sorts of stalls,
Filled with sweet cakes, and gingerbread, and crumpets;

And then there is the learned pig,
And the great "Mister Bigg,"
The famous English Patagonian;
And the gray pony that can dance so well;
And then there is the wee, wee man,
That in seven languages can read and spell,
Though scarcely bigger than a lady's fan;
And crowds of people staring in amaze,
And thronging twenty different ways,
And pushing you against the wall,
Till you can scarcely keep your legs at all.

Well, unto this same fair
There came, the night before,
A famous dancing-bear,
And several monkeys on his back he bore;
But with the monkeys we have nought to do—
The bear alone concerns our story.
Now, as night's curtain had begun to drop,
And they had travelled far,
The master of the bear resolved to stop,
Just where the town lay stretching out before ye,
Until the morning, at the Golden Star;
So, without more ado,
The bear was led,
Into a little shed,
And housed, as they thought, for the night.
Bruin, however, did not like his quarters,
And, without asking if the thing were right,
Or sifting an important business through,
As reasonable people do,

Walked out; nor did mine hostess, nor her
daughters,
Nor guest of any sort, behold him go.

By this time it was dark enough;
And bruin walked into a common rough
That lay behind the Golden Star;
And there he wandered up and down,
When thus it came to pass: —
A baker from the town
Was carrying fagots for the morning;
And he had not gone far
Before he saw what he supposed an ass,
In the dusk night-fall, shaggy, wild, and black;
So, without any warning,
He threw the fagots on his back,
Thinking it was a lucky chance
To meet with such a beast!
Bruin, thus taken by surprise,
Began to prance
And growl, and stare with fiery eyes.
The man, who never in the least
Expected such a spirited retort,
Stopped for a moment short;
Then sprang along o'er smooth and rough,
Expecting that a thing
So wild and gruff
Upon his back would make a sudden spring,
And eat him at a mouthful, sure enough!
Poor bruin had no such intent;
But on he went,

Down to a neighboring lane,
Picking his way as best he could. —
But in my second part, I will explain
The nature of the place whereon he stood.

PART II.

'Twas on the confines of that common hoary,
Which, like a wall, stood up against the lane, —
Because the common was much higher ground, —
So that the houses standing there
Seemed at the back only one single story,
Though, in the front, they all of them were twain.
I'm very much afraid this will be found
An explanation rather dark and lame;
But as you read you'll understand it better,
If you attend, at least, unto the letter.
But let us now unto the bear: —
'Twas to the back of such a house he came,
Built 'gainst this higher ground,
So that he found,
Without being in the least to blame,
His nose against a window-grate
Which opened straight
Into a well-stored larder.
In this small house there dwelt another baker,
A famous man for penny pies;

Of cakes and gingerbread a noted maker,
And sausages likewise.
No wonder let it be, therefore,
That there was such a store
Of legs of mutton, dainty pork,
And pies just ready for the knife and fork.
These things just standing under bruin's nose,
You may suppose
Would make him long to have a little taste;
So, through the grate,
Headlong he plunged — a lumbering weight —
And many jingling tins displaced.
Poor bruin never thought, not he,
The window was just at the ceiling,
And he should fall so far and heavily;
And, after all, be taken up for stealing!
The baker, being awakened by this din,
Blunder on blunder, tin on tin,
Thought twenty thieves were breaking in!
He was a tall and sturdy fellow,
And to his only son,
Most stoutly he began to bellow:
"Jack, get the double-barrelled gun;
A host of thieves is in the pantry —
Twenty they are, or more;
Do you go out and keep strict sentry,
And shoot the first who ventures out,
The while I guard the door!"
As soon as said, the thing was done —
Jack took the double-barrelled gun,
And stood before the broken grate:

"Ah, thieves!" said he, with lusty shout,
"If you come out,
I'll scatter twenty bullets round about!"
The bear, so frightened at this sad disaster,
And thinking Jack must be his master,
Lay quite stock still:
Meanwhile, the baker stood before,
And double-locked the pantry-door.
"There, there!" said he, "I've got them fast;
I've caught the rogues at last!"
All this poor bruin heard,
And much he marvelled at his case;
Thus prisoned in that trap-like place;
Yet so the baker scolded if he stirred;
And so much did he fear his master's stick,
Heavy and thick,
He dared not reconnoitre, nor look out,
Lest something worse should come about;
Therefore, he lay quite still,
Though it was very much against his will.
Jack was outside, a watchful sentinel:
He noted all that happened in the night;
He heard the asses braying on the common;
He saw the earliest streak of morning light;
He heard the watchmen in the town,
With their dull voices passing up and down,
And the Exchange clock, with its heavy bell,
The hours with quarters tell;
He saw the earliest passing countrywoman;
And now a man, and now a boy he saw;
And now the morning grew so keen and raw,

He wished his task was o'er;
And now he heard the clocks strike four;
And now, — O welcome sight, —
He, in the Golden Star, beheld a light!

While Jack to notice all these things was able,
His father made
A very decent sort of barricade,
Of chair and table;
So that the foe, if he had been inclined
To issue forth, might find
The thing impracticable.
This done, soon as the clock struck four,
The baker left his door;
But all so silently,
That the trapped enemy
Might still suppose him watching at his post,
As powerful as a host.
Down to the Golden Star in haste he ran,
And there he found them bustling all about,
Fetching and carrying, mistress, maid, and man,
Though 'twas so early, going in and out.
To them he told the adventures of the night,
And all were in a great affright;
And all indignant at the thieves' audacity:
"Is it not wonderful!" said they;
"But in the present day,
All men, even thieves, have an improved capacity!"
This said, with sudden haste
They called up every guest,

PUBLIC

Carter, and cattle-driver, groom, and jockey,
And the bear's master, wild and black;
Until the baker thought he was most lucky
To muster such a party at his back.

Unto the house they came, and pulled down, first,
The formidable barricade;
And then they grew afraid,
Lest out the dreadful enemy should burst.
At length each heart grew bolder,
And o'er his neighbor's shoulder
Each held a lighted candle; and, *en masse*,
They rushed into the place where bruin was!
There, skulking in his shaggy coat, they saw
A frightful something with a paw!
"Up, up with you at once!"
Shouted poor bruin's master in his ears;
And he, who was no dunce,
And had so many fears,
And knew that voice so well,
Sprang in a moment to his hinder legs,
Just like a little dog that begs,
And danced a hornpipe to a miracle!
Half angry was the baker, seeing thus,
That, after all his fuss,
The thieves were nothing but a dancing-bear!
And yet he took it in good part,
And tried to laugh with all his heart,
And said it was a joke most capital!
And, through all the fair,
'Twas told, at every booth and every stall,

What fancy bruin had for dainty store;
And many people gave him gingerbread;
And he with buns and penny-pies was fed,
So that he never fared so well before!

THE SOLDIER'S STORY.

"HEAVEN bless the boys!" the old man said;
"I hear their distant drumming:
Young Arthur Bruce is at their head,
And down the street they're coming.

"And a very noble standard too
He carries in the van;
By the faith of an old soldier, he
Is born to make a man!"

A glow of pride passed o'er his cheek,
A tear came to his eye;
"Hurrah, hurrah! my gallant men!"
Cried he, as they came nigh.

"It seems to me but yesterday
Since I was one like ye;
And now my years are seventy-two;—
Come here, and talk with me!"

They made a halt, those merry boys,
Before the aged man;
And "Tell us now some story wild,"
Young Arthur Bruce began;—

"Of battle and of victory
Tell us some stirring thing!"
The old man raised his arm aloft,
And cried, "God save the king!

"A soldier's is a life of fame,
A life that hath its meed —
They write his wars in printed books,
That every man may read.

"And if you'd hear a story wild,
Of war and battle done,
I am the man to tell such tales,
And you shall now have one.

"In every quarter of the globe
I've fought — by sea, by land;
And scarce for five-and-fifty years
Was the musket from my hand.

"But the bloodiest wars, and fiercest too,
That were waged on any shore,
Were those in which my strength was spent,
In the country of Mysore.

"And, O! what a fearful, deadly clime
Is that of the Indian land,
Where the burning sun shines fiercely down
On the hot and fiery sand!

"The life of man seems little worth,
And his arm hath little power;
His very soul within him dies,
As dies a broken flower.

"Yet, spite of this, was India made
As for a kingly throne;
There gold is plentiful as dust,
As sand the diamond stone;—

"And like a temple is each house,
Silk-curtained from the sun;
And every man has twenty slaves,
Who at his bidding run.

"He rides on the lordly elephant,
In solemn pomp; — and there
They hunt the gold-striped tiger,
As here they hunt the hare.

"Yet it is a dreadful clime! and we
Up in the country far
Were sent, — we were two thousand men, —
In a disastrous war.

"The soldiers died in the companies
As if the plague had been;
And soon in every twenty men,
The dead were seventeen.

"We went to storm a fort of mud —
And yet the place was strong —
Three thousand men were guarding it,
And they had kept it long.

"We were in all three hundred souls,
Feeble, and worn, and wan;
Like walking spectres of the tomb
Was every living man.

"Yet Arthur Bruce, now standing there,
With the ensign of his band,
Reminds me of a gallant youth,
Who fought at my right hand, —

"Scarce five-and-twenty years of age,
And feeble as the rest,
Yet with the bearing of a king,
That a noble soul expressed.

"But a silent grief was in his eye,
And oft his noble frame
Shook like a quivering aspen leaf,
And his color went and came.

"He marched by my side for seven days,
Most patient of our band;
And night and day he ever kept
Our standard in his hand.

"They fought with us like tigers,
Before that fort of mud;
And all around the burning sands
Were as a marsh with blood.

"We watched that young man; — he to us
Was as a kindling hope; —
We saw him pressing on and on,
Bearing the standard up.

"At length it for a moment veered —
A ball had struck his hand;
But he seized the banner with his left,
Without a moment's stand.

"He mounted upward to the wall;
He waved the standard high; —
But then another smote him! —
And the captain standing by

"Said, 'Of this gallant youth take care;
He hath won for us the day!'
I and my comrades took him up,
And bore him thence away.

"There was no tree about the place;
So 'neath the fortress' shade
We carried him, and carefully
Upon the red sand laid.

"I took the feather from my cap,
To fan his burning cheek;
I gave him water drop by drop,
And prayed that he would speak.

"At length he said, 'Mine hour is come!
My soldier-name is bright;
But a pang there is within my soul,
That hath wrung me day and night.

"'I left my mother's home without
Her blessing;—she doth mourn,
Doth weep for me with bitter tears,—
I never can return!

"'This bowed my eagle-spirit down;
This robbed mine eye of rest;
I left her widowed and alone;—
O that I had been blessed!'

"No more he said: he closed his eyes;
And yet he died not then;
He lived till the morrow morning came,
But he never spoke again."

This tale the veteran soldier told
Upon a summer's day;—
The boys came merrily down the street,
But they all went sad away.

MARIEN LEE.

Not a care hath Marien Lee,
Dwelling by the sounding sea!
Her young life's a flowery way:—
Without toil from day to day,
Without bodings for the morrow,—
Marien was not made for sorrow!

Like the summer-billows wild
Leaps the happy-hearted child;
Sees her father's fishing-boat
O'er the waters gayly float;
Hears her brother's fishing-song
On the light gale borne along;
Half a league she hears the lay,
Ere they turn into the bay,
And with glee, o'er cliff and main,
Sings an answer back again,
Which by man and boy is heard,
Like the carol of a bird.
Look! she sitteth laughing there,
Wreathing sea-weed in her hair:
Saw ye e'er a thing so fair?

Marien, some are rich in gold,
Heaped-up treasure-stores untold;
Some in thought sublime refined,
And the glorious wealth of mind:
Thou, sweet child, life's rose unblown,
Hast a treasure of thine own —
Youth's most unalloyed delights;
Happy days and tranquil nights;
Hast a brain with thought unvexed;
A heart untroubled, unperplexed!
Go, thou sweet one, all day long,
Like a glad bird, pour thy song;
And let thy young, graceful head
Be with sea-flowers garlanded;
For all outward signs of glee
Well befit thee, Marien Lee!

THE CHILD'S LAMENT.

I LIKE it not — this noisy street
  I never liked, nor can I now —
I love to feel the pleasant breeze
On the free hills, and see the trees,
  With birds upon the bough!

O, I remember long ago, —
  So long ago, 'tis like a dream, —
My home was on a green hill-side,
By flowery meadows, still and wide,
  'Mong trees, and by a stream.

Three happy brothers I had then,
  My merry playmates every day —
I've looked and looked through street and square,
But never chanced I, any where,
  To see such boys as they.

We all had gardens of our own, —
  Four little gardens in a row, —
And there we set our twining peas;
And rows of cress; and real trees,
  And real flowers to grow.

My father I remember too,
And even now his face can see;
And the gray horse he used to ride,
And the old dog that at his side
Went barking joyfully!

He used to fly my brothers' kites,
And build them up a man of snow,
And sail their boats, and with them race;
And carry me from place to place,
Just as I liked to go.

I'm sure he was a pleasant man,
And people must have loved him well! —
O, I remember that sad day
When they bore him in a hearse away,
And tolled his funeral bell!

Thy mother comes each night to kiss
Thee, in thy little quiet bed —
So came my mother years ago;
And I loved her — O! I loved her so,
'Twas joy to hear her tread!

It must be many, many years
Since then, and yet I can recall
Her very tone — her look — her dress,
Her pleasant smile and gentleness,
That had kind words for all.

She told us tales, she sang us songs,
And in our pastimes took delight,

And joined us in our summer glee,
And sat with us beneath the tree;
Nor wearied of our company,
Whole days, from morn till night.

Alas! I know that she is dead,
And in the cold, cold grave is hid;
I saw her in her coffin lie,
With the grim mourners standing by;
And silent people solemnly
Closed down the coffin-lid.

My brothers were not there — ah me!
I know not where they went; some said
With a rich man beyond the sea
That they were dwelling pleasantly —
And some, that they were dead.

I cannot think that it is so;
I never saw them pale and thin;
And the last time their voice I heard,
Merry were they as a summer-bird,
Singing its bower within.

I wish that I could see their faces,
Or know at least that they were near;
Ah! gladly would I cross the sea,
So that with them I might but be,
For now my days pass wearily,
And all are strangers here.

THE SAILOR'S WIFE.

A TALE OF THE SEA.

HEAVEN keep the wives of seamen,
And bless their children small,
For they have power to cheer us,
If sorrow should befall!

I'll tell you how the thoughts of them
Once saved a ship in need,
As if they'd been the seraphim
That had of us good heed.

A stout ship was the Halcyon,
As ever sailed the sea;
The crew that manned the Halcyon
Were thirty hands and three.

I was the good ship's purser —
The ocean was my joy —
The waves had been my playmates
When I was but a boy.

The master of the Halcyon
Was good as he was bold;
Let the name of William Morrison
Throughout the world be told!

We heaved the Halcyon's anchor
On the twenty-first of May,
And from our wives and children
With sorrow went away.

My wife was bonny Betsy,
Both trim and true was she;
We called the good ship after her,
When next we went to sea:
And how this glory chanced to her,
I'll tell ye presently.

With her I left two children,
More dear than mines of gold —
Another dark-haired Betsy,
And a boy scarce two years old.

Said I, "My bonny Betsy,
These idle tears restrain;
The happy day will soon come round,
When we shall meet again!

"So, fare ye well, my jewels!"
Said I, in feigned glee,
For I feared the pain of parting
Would make a child of me.

We went on board the Halcyon,
On the twenty-first of May,
And with a fresh and prosperous gale,
From England bore away.

We were bound unto the islands
In the South Pacific Sea;
And many a day, and many a week,
We sailed on prosperously.

But then a dreadful malady
Broke out among the crew;
The ocean-waves rolled heavily,
And the hot wind scarcely blew!

'Twas on a Monday morning,
When first the plague appeared,
About the latter days of June,
When the Equinox we neared.

The brave men gazed in sorrow,
The weak men in despair —
As the reaper in the harvest-field,
Death drove his sickle there!

They died within the hammock,
They dropped from off the shroud;
And then they 'gan to murmur,
And misery spoke aloud.

When at the helm the helmsman died,
All care of life seemed gone;
We sate in stupid anguish,
And let the ship drive on.

We looked upon each other
In terror and dismay;
We feared each other's company,
And longed to get away.

But death was in the vessel,
And death was on the sea;—
Said they, "We'll launch the long-boat,
And so part company."

In all we were but thirteen men;
And with that sluggish wind,
Six of our number put to sea,
And seven remained behind.

In vain the captain urged them
By the vessel to remain;
But woe had made them reckless,
And they answered not again.

We saw, throughout that weary day,
A westward course they bore;
But we lost them on the morrow,
And never saw them more.

Our captain sate among us,
As he for long had done,
And cheered with comfortable words,
When comfort else was none.

Said he, " My brave companions,
Still let us nobly strive,
And for our wives and children,
Keep fainting hope alive!

" There was one, the bonny Betsy,
With a child in either hand—
I saw her tears at parting,
As she stood on the strand

" We all have wives in England—
Come, yield not to dismay;
Let's give a cheer for Betsy,
And do the best we may!

" Ye shall live to smile at sorrow!—
Brave hearts, let's down with pain!
Please God, we'll bring the Halcyon
To England once again!"

So spoke good William Morrison,
His tears but half repressed;
And all rose up as if renewed,
And vowed to do our best.

It seemed the plague had left us,
And we were strong men all,
When we thought on those who loved us,
Our wives and children small.

And soon upsprung a cooling gale,
A cool gale and a strong;
And from those deadly latitudes
The good ship bore along.

We were but seven mariners,
And yet we were enow;
And we cheered for bonny Betsy,
With every rope we drew.

They looked on me with kindness,
As on we gayly moved;
For each man in my Betsy
Beheld the wife he loved.

Heaven bless the wives of seamen,
And be their children's stay,
For they have power to cheer us,
When we are far away!

And so we made our voyage
Across the southern main,
And brought that gallant vessel
To England safe again.

They named her there the "Betsy,"
Before the second trip;
And I'll abide beside her,
As long as she's a ship!

Now let us cheer for joy in store,
For sorrow that is gone,
And for my bonny Betsy,
And Captain Morrison!

THE MORNING DRIVE.

A PLAY FOR VERY LITTLE CHILDREN.

O, DEAR mamma! I'm glad you've come!
  Pray look, for we pretend
I'm riding in a pony chaise
  To see an absent friend.

Now, is it not a famous scheme,
  As like as chaise can be?
And such a noble horse as this
  We very seldom see.

For 'tis a true Arabian,
  As white as driven snow;
'Twas bounding o'er the desert sands
  Not many months ago!

And we pretend we speed along
  Like arrows in the wind;
And Charley is my servant lad,
  Who gallops just behind

And so, mamma, we're driving out—
And 'tis a morn in May;
And we can scent the hawthorn flowers,
As we go by the way.

And we can see the bird-cherry
Upon the green hills wide,
And cowslips pale and orchises,
And many flowers beside.

And little lambs are all at play;
And birds are singing clear;
Now, is it not a charming thing
To be thus driving here?

And O, mamma! we've seen such things!
Charley would have it so—
Although a little servant lad
Should not dictate, you know.

And, first, we met a drove of pigs,
Great Irish pigs and strong;
And O! I so much trouble had,
To get the horse along!

And then a great, wild Highland herd
Filled all the narrow road;
They looked like mountain buffaloes,
And wildly stared and lowed;—

And 'neath their shaggy brows, on us
  Such dismal looks they cast!
Mamma, 'twas really wonderful
  How ever we got past!

And coaches we have met, and carts,
  And beggars lame and blind;
And all to please this serving-boy,
  Who gallops just behind.

Come up, my little horse, come up;
  I'm sure you can't be tired;
You never must be weary, sir,
  When you're so much admired!

There, now we're at the turnpike-gate,
  And now we're driven through;
Over the hill, my little horse,
  And then the town's in view.

There, now we're in the town itself;
  "Smith," "Hopkins," "Cook and Jones;"
One scarce can read these great gilt names,
  For jumbling o'er the stones!

And now we pass "The Old Green Man,"
  And now we pass "The Sun;"
And next across the market-place,
  And then the journey's done.

Ah! now I see the very house;
And there's the drawing-room;
Charley, alight, and give my card,
And ask if they're at home.

O yes! I see them every one;
There's Anne, and Jane, and Kate;
No, Charley, now you need not ring,
For they are at the gate.

And now, mamma, that we are here,
Will you pretend to be
The ladies all so kind and good,
Whom we are come to see?

THE FOUND TREASURE.

O Harry, come hither, and lay down your book,
And see what a treasure I've found! only look!
'Tis as handsome a kitten as ever you saw,
Equipped like a cat, with tail, whisker, and claw.
See, here it is ready for pastime and freak,
Though it looks at this moment so sober and meek:
Yes, Harry, examine it over and over,
'Tis really the kitten no one could discover!

O Kit, we have sought you above and below;
We have gone where a mouser never could go;
We have hunted in garrets with diligent care,
In chambers and closets — but you were not there;
We have been in dark corners with lanterns to see;
We've peeped in the hayloft if there you might be
And the parlor and kitchen we've searched through and through,
And listened in vain for your musical mew!

And who would have thought that a sensible puss,
As your mother is deemed, would have harassed us thus?

Then to bury you here, in this odd, little den!
But you never, my Kit, shall be buried again;
You shall go to the parlor, and sit on the hearth,
And there we will laugh at your frolicsome mirth;
You shall caper about on the warm kitchen floor,
And in the hot sunshine shall bask at the door.

You shall have a round cork at the end of a string
Tied up to the table, you gray, little thing!
You shall twirl round and round, like a brisk windmill sail,
You poor little simpleton, after your tail;
And jump in affright from a shade on the wall;
And spring, like a tiger, on nothing at all —
While my father will lay his old book on his knee,
And my mother look up from her knitting to see.

I am glad we have found you before you were wise,
And had learned all a kitten's arch ways to despise;
Before you grew sober, demure, and all that,
And adhered to grave rules, like a well-behaved cat!
Come, Kitty, we'll take you, this same afternoon,
And show you about, like a man from the moon.
There, down in your basket, we'll cover you so,
And ask but a pin for a peep at the show!

THOUGHTS OF HEAVEN.

Thoughts of heaven! they come when low
The summer eve's breeze doth faintly blow;
When the mighty sea shines clear, unstirred
By the wavering tide or the dipping bird.
They come in the rush of the surging storm,
When the waves rear up their giant form,
When the breakers dash o'er dark-rocks, white,
And the terrible lightnings rend the night;
When the mighty ship hath vainly striven;
With the seaman's cry, come thoughts of heaven!

They come where man doth not intrude;
In the trackless forest's solitude;
In the stillness of the gray rock's height,
Whence the lonely eagle takes his flight;
On peaks where lie the unwasting snows;
In the sun-bright islands' rich repose;
In the heathery glen; by the dark, clear lake,
Where the wild swan broods in the reedy brake;
Where nature reigns in her deepest rest,
Pure thoughts of heaven come unrepressed.

They come as we gaze on the midnight sky,
When the star-gemmed vault is dark and high,

And the soul, on the wings of thought sublime,
Soars from the world and the bounds of time,
Till the mental eye becomes unsealed,
And the mystery of being in light revealed!
They rise in the old cathedral dim,
When slowly bursts forth the holy hymn,
And the organ's tones swell full and high,
Till the roof peals back the melody.

Thoughts of heaven! from his joy beguiled,
They come to the bright-eyed, playful child;
To the man of age in his dull decay,
Bringing hopes that his youth took not away;
To the woe-smit soul, in its dark distress,
As flowers spring up in the wilderness; —
Like the light of day in its blessed fall,
Such holy thoughts are given to all!

A DAY OF HARD WORK.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN HARRY AND KITTY.

KITTY. — Well, now you've been running about so, pray can't you sit still?
I want to have some talk with you, and I certainly will:
I've got all this unpicking to do, for while I talk I must work;
You boys can run about idling — I sit stitching like a Turk.
Come, now tell me, can't you, something about the farm-yard?
How many eggs has the turkey laid? — and is that muddy place dry and hard?
Come, tell me in a minute; I haven't patience to wait;
And till you begin, sir, there's a thimble-pie for you on the top of your pate.

HARRY. — O Kitty! you've knocked me so, I'll tell my mother, that I will!
If you do so, miss, nobody will like you; so you'd better be still.

KITTY. — Well, then, tell me something! Why should I be still and nobody talking?

HARRY. — O, I'm tired with this running about,
and this riding, and this walking;
I wish there was no such thing as running or
walking at all;
And I wish every horse were in the fields, or else
tied up in its stall!
What's your work, Kitty? sitting still in the house
at ease;
You've nothing to do but sit down, and get up
again, just as you please;
And yet you talk of your work, as if 'twas the
hardest that e'er was done;
Why, compare it with mine, child, and I'm sure it's
nothing but fun!
KITTY. — Child! I'm no more child than you; I'm
but younger by a year;
I desire you speak respectfully to me, now, sir, —
do you hear?
HARRY. — Yes, yes, I hear! But I really am so
tired, as I was just now saying;
I wish you'd get your work done, and let's begin
playing!
You can't believe, I'm sure, all the work I've done
this day —
I've weeded two carrot-beds, and the onions — and
carried all the weeds away;
And I've been down to Thomas Jackson's to tell
him to get the horse shod;
And in coming back, there was a great, big, rusty
nail, upon which I trod;

And it lamed me so, I don't believe I shall walk
for a week,
At least as I ought to do, for my ankle has quite a
creak!
KITTY. — O dear, let me look at it! Why, I'm
sure it is quite shocking —
See, there's a hole as large as my thimble in the
ankle of your stocking!
HARRY. — O no, 'tis the other foot — *that* I tore
with a bramble;
And that reminds me, Jack Smith and I had such
a terrible scramble!
We were catching the pony that I might ride down
to the mill,
To bid him bring the flour home, for I declare he
has it still;
And we shan't have a bit of white bread in the
house, nor a pudding, nor a pie,
If he don't bring it home — every one says he's
shamefully idle, and so do I.
Well, but I haven't told you, after all, what a deal
of work I've done;
And I'm sure if you knew what weeding was, you
would not call it fun;
It makes one's back ache so, stooping to weed all
day,
I shall be famously glad when it's done!
KITTY. — But are you quite ready for play?
've but a little bit to do — I shall have done in
half a quarter of an hour;

And as you've nothing to do, just run and see if that lavender's in flower —
There's a good Harry, do; I'll do seven times as much for you;
You know I sewed, yesterday, that old clasp in your shoe.
HARRY. — I'd go, if I thought you'd have done by the time I come back;
KITTY. — To be sure I shall! — I wish you would not waste so much time with your clack!
HARRY. — Well, just let me pull up my shoe, and put by this peacock's feather.
KITTY. — Nay, you may as well stay now; I've just done, and we'll both go together;
For I want to show you something like a magpie's nest up in a tree,
Only I don't think it is a magpie's nest, and I can't think what it can be;
And it is just by the lavender bush, and 'twill save us going there twice: —
There, now I've done my work! and I shall be ready in a trice!
HARRY. — Well, then, let us begone; we shall have two whole hours for play;
I didn't think we should have had so much time, and I' been working all day!

THE OLD MAN AND THE CARRION CROW

THERE was a man, and his name was Jack,
Crabbed and lean, and his looks were black;
His temper was sour, his thoughts were bad;
His heart was hard when he was a lad.
And now he followed a dismal trade;
Old horses he bought, and killed, and flayed;
Their flesh he sold for the dogs to eat;
You would not have liked this man to meet.
He lived in a low mud-house on a moor,
Without any garden before the door.
There was one little hovel behind, that stood
Where he used to do his work of blood;
I never could bear to see the place;
It was stained and darkened with many a trace;
A trace of what I will not tell —
And then there was such an unchristian smell!

Now, this old man did come and go
Through the wood that grew in the dell below;
It was scant a mile from his own door-stone,
Darksome, and dense, and overgrown;
And down in the drearest nook of the wood,
A tall and splintered fir-tree stood:

Half way up, where the boughs outspread,
A carrion crow his nest had made,
Of sticks and reeds, in the dark fir-tree,
Where lay his mate and his nestlings three;
And whenever he saw the man come by,
"Dead horse! dead horse!" he was sure to cry.
"Croak, croak!" if he went or came,
The cry of the crow was just the same.
Jack looked up as grim as could be,
And says, "What's my trade to the like of thee?"
"Dead horse! dead horse! croak, croak! croak, croak!"
As plain as words to his ear it spoke.
Old Jack stooped down, and picked up a stone,
A stout, thick stick, and dry cow's-bone,
And one and the other all three did throw,
So angry was he at the carrion crow;
But none of the three reached him or his nest,
Where his three young crows lay warm at rest;
And "Croak, croak! dead horse! croak, croak!"
In his solemn way again he spoke;
Old Jack was angry as he could be,
And says he, "On the morrow, I'll fell thy tree, —
I'll teach thee, old fellow, to rail at me!"

As soon as 'twas light, if there you had been,
Old Jack at his work you might have seen;
I would you'd been there to see old Jack,
And to hear the strokes as they came "thwack! thwack!"

And then you'd have seen how the croaking bird
Flew round as the axe's strokes he heard,
Flew round as he saw the shaking blow,
That came to his nest from the root below.
One after the other, stroke upon stroke;
"Thwack! thwack!" said the axe; said the crow,
"Croak! croak!"
Old Jack looked up with a leer in his eye,
And, "I'll hew it down!" says he, "by and by!
I'll teach thee to rail, my old fellow, at me!"
So he spit on his hands, and says, "Have at the tree!"
"Thwack!" says the axe, as the bark it clove;
"Thwack!" as into the wood it drove;
"Croak!" says the crow in a great dismay,
"Croak!" as he slowly flew away.
Flap, flap went his wings over hedge and ditch,
Till he came to a field of burning twitch;
The boy with a lighted lantern there,
As he stood on the furrow brown and bare,
He saw the old crow hop hither and thither,
Then fly with a burning sod somewhither.

Away flew the crow to the house on the moor,
A poor, old horse was tied to the door;
The burning sod on the roof he dropped,
Then upon the chimney stone he hopped,
And down he peeped that he might see,
How many there were in family —
There was a mother and children three.

"Croak! croak!" the old crow did say,
As from the roof he flew away,
As he flew away to a tree, to watch
The burning sod and the dry gray thatch;
He staid not long till he saw it smoke,
Then he flapped his wings, and cried, "Croak, croak!"

Away to the wood again flew he,
And soon he espied the slanting tree,
And Jack, who stood laughing with all his might,
His axe in his hand — he laughed for spite;
In triumph he laughed, and took up a stone,
And hammered his axe-head faster on;
"Croak, croak!" came the carrion crow,
Flapping his wings with a motion slow;
"Thwack, thwack!" the spiteful man,
When he heard his cry, with his axe began;
"Thwack, thwack!" stroke upon stroke;
The crow flew by with a "Croak, croak!"
With a "Croak, croak!" again he came,
Just as the house burst into flame.
With a splitting crash, and a crackling sound,
Down came the tree unto the ground;
The old crow's nest afar was swung,
And the young ones here and there were flung;
And just at that moment came up a cry,
"O Jack, make haste, or else we die;
The house is on fire, consuming all;
Make haste, make haste, ere the roof-tree fall!

The young crows every one were dead;
But the old crow croaked above his head;
And the mother-crow on Jack she springs,
And flaps in his face her great, black wings;
And all the while he hears a wail,
That turns his cheek from red to pale—
'Twas wife and children standing there,
Wringing their hands and tearing their hair!
"O woe! our house is burnt to cinder,
Bedding and clothes all turned to tinder;
Down to the very hearth-stone clean;
Such a dismal ruin ne'er was seen!
"What shall we do?—where must we go?"
"Croak, croak!" says the carrion crow.

Now ye who read this story through,
Heed well the moral—'tis for you;—
Strife brings forth strife; be meek and kind;
See all things with a loving mind;
Nor e'er by passion be misled,—
Jack by himself was punished.

MAY FAIR.

THERE is a town in Staffordshire,
That I was born and bred in,
And dear May Fair can make it gayer
Than even a royal wedding.

Come, I'll live o'er my youth again:
Life has enough of sorrow;
From by-gone things we'll mirth obtain,
And think of care to-morrow.

Come, we'll be drest all in our best;
For, hark! the bells are ringing;
And there's no sign of rain to-day,
And all the birds are singing.

With happy folks beside us then,
Their smiles like summer weather:
See how the women and the men
Come trooping in together.

And some come with a hobbling gait,
And some come tripping proudly,
And some come looking quite sedate,
And some come laughing loudly.

All come that can; each farming man
His best blue coat is wearing,
And cart and gig, and shandry-dan,
Bring fine folks to the fair in.

And little lads, brimful of glee,
With hands their pockets thrust in;
And trousers turned up neatly, see,
To keep their shoes from dusting.

Now crowd they all amid the rout,
As full of mirth as any,
Each looking eagerly about
To spend his fairing penny.

And this will buy a cow and calf—
But this of cakes is fonder;
And these will go to see the Dwarf,
And those the Giant yonder.

And roving round, see happy folks,
With sunny, country faces;
Some cracking nuts, some cracking jokes,
Some wearing modish graces.

And just peep on the bowling-green;
What capering and what prancing!
He's fiddling there a merry air,
To the merry people dancing!

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Now, see those girls, with one accord,
  Around that booth are staring;
And many a lad has spent his hoard,
  To buy a handsome fairing.

See, some give ribands red and blue,
  And some give green and yellow;
And some give rings and brooches too,
  To show a generous fellow.

Now hushed is every laugh and joke,
  To hear a sailor singing,
How "Poll of Plymouth's" heart was broke,
  And "Monmouth's bells were ringing."

And then how brave "Tom Tough," d'ye see,
  Brought to the Frenchmen ruin;
Of "Barbara Allen's cruelty,"
  And "Crazy Jane's" undoing.

But ere he has the next begun, —
  See, round all eyes are glancing, —
He stands alone, for all are gone
  To see the dogs a-dancing!

Ha! there they are — why, what a crowd!
  And what a deafening racket!
Well may they stare, for there's a bear,
  And monkey in a jacket!

But let us leave this noisy rout;
And let us leave the singing; —
We have not seen the round-about,
Nor have we seen the swinging.

We have not seen old wicked Punch
His little wife a-beating;
We have not thought what must be bought
For wearing nor for eating.

We have not been to see the shows,
The lion and his crony;
The child so big — the learned pig —
Nor yet the learned pony.

Why, what a deal we have to do!
Come, miss, and little master;
We shan't get back by nine o'clock,
Unless we travel faster!

There now, we have seen every thing,
And each has got a fairing!
And homeward all, both great and small,
Are leisurely repairing.

And hark! the bells are ringing round,
As they rung in the morning;
But O! they have a different sound
In going and returning!

FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

THERE were six merry children, all frolic and fun,
At play on a green 'neath the midsummer sun!
And thus they sang, in their heartsome glee,—
"We're French and English — three against three.
These are the Frenchmen, meagre and thin,
Hop, skip, and jump, — do you think they'll win?
These are the Englishmen, sturdy and stout;
Brave in the battle, they'll win, no doubt.
Pull away, pull with all your might —
Pull away — that's the way we fight!

"Twenty battles we fight in a day;
Some we win, as best we may;
Some we lose, but we care not a pin —
If we did not laugh, we should always win.
French and English — here we stand —
Three in an army, on either hand!
Pull away, pull with all your might —
Pull away — that's the way we fight!

"Who cares for a battle where nobody's slain?
They who are down may get up again!
None run away, like a coward or knave —
Frenchmen and Englishmen, all are brave!

Now again let the battle be tried,
Three for an army on either side;
Pull away, pull with all your might —
Pull away — that's the way we fight!"

THE LITTLE MARINER.

Ay, sitting on your happy hearths, beside your
mother's knee,
How should you know the miseries and dangers of
the sea!
My father was a mariner, and from my earliest
years,
I can remember, night and day, my mother's
prayers and tears.

I can remember how she sighed when blew the
stormy gale;
And how for days she stood to watch the long-
expected sail:
Hers was a silent, patient grief; but fears and long
delay,
And wakeful nights and anxious days, were wearing
her away.

And when the gusty winds were loud, and autumn
leaves were red,
I watched, with heavy heart, beside my mother's
dying bed;

Just when her voice was feeblest, the neighbors came to say,
The ship was hailed an hour before, and then was in the bay.

Alas! too late the ship returned, too late her life to save;
My father closed her dying eyes, and laid her in the grave.
He was a man of ardent hopes, who never knew dismay;
And, spite of grief, the winter-time wore cheerfully away.

He had crossed the equinoctial line full seven times or more,
And, sailing northward, had been wrecked on icy Labrador:
He knew the Spice-isles, every one, where the clove and nutmeg grow,
And the aloe towers a stately tree, with clustering bells of snow.

He had gone the length of Hindostan, down Ganges' holy flood;
Through Persia, where the peacock broods, a wild bird of the wood;
And, in the forests of the West, had seen the red-deer chased,
And dwelt beneath the piny woods, a hunter of the waste.

O! pleasant were the tales he told of lands so strange and new;
And, in my ignorance, I vowed I'd be a sailor too:
My father heard my vow with joy: so in the early May,
We went on board a merchant-man, bound for Honduras' Bay.

Right merrily, right merrily, we sailed before the wind,
With a briskly heaving sea before, and the landsman's cheer behind.
There was joy for me in every league, delight on every strand,
And I sate for days on the high fore-top, on the long look-out for land.

There was joy for me in the nightly watch, on the burning tropic seas,
To mark the waves, like living fires, leap up to the freshening breeze.
Right merrily, right merrily, our gallant ship went free,
Until we neared the rocky shoals within the Western Sea.

Yet still none thought of danger near, till, in the silent night,
The helmsman gave the dreadful word, of "Breakers to the right!"

The moment that his voice was heard, was felt the awful shock;
The ship sprang forward with a bound, and struck upon a rock.

"All hands aloft!" our captain cried; — in terror and dismay
They threw the cargo overboard, and cut the masts away;
'Twas all in vain, 'twas all in vain! the sea rushed o'er the deck,
And shattered with the beating surf, down went the parting wreck.

The moment that the wreck went down, my father seized me fast,
And, leaping 'mid the thundering waves, seized on the broken mast:
I know not how he bore me up; my senses seemed to swim;
A shuddering horror chilled my brain, and stiffened every limb.

What next I knew, was how, at morn, on a bleak, barren shore,
Out of a hundred mariners, were living only four.
I looked around, like one who wakes from dreams of fierce alarm,
And round my body still I felt, firm locked, my father's arm.

And with a rigid, dying grasp, he closely held me fast,
Even as he held me when he seized, at midnight, on the mast.
With humbled hearts and streaming eyes, down knelt the little band,
Praying Him who had preserved their lives, to lend his guiding hand.

And day by day, though burning thirst and pining hunger came,
His mercy, through our misery, preserved each drooping frame;
And after months of weary woe, sickness, and travel sore,
He sent the blessed English ship that took us from that shore.

And now, without a home or friend, I wander far and near,
And tell my miserable tale to all who lend an ear.
Thus sitting by your happy hearths, beside your mother's knee,
How should you know the miseries and dangers of the sea?

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R L

THE SNOW-DROP.

The snow-drop! 'Tis an English flower,
And grows beneath our garden trees;
For every heart it has a dower,
And old and dear remembrances!
All look upon it, and straightway
Recall their youth like yesterday,
Their sunny years, when forth they went,
Wandering in measureless content;
Their little plot of garden-ground;
The mossy orchard's quiet bound;
Their father's house, so free from care,
And the familiar faces there!
The household voices kind and sweet,
That knew no feigning — hushed and gone!
The mother that was sure to greet
Their coming with a welcome tone;
The brothers that were children then,
Now, anxious, toiling, thoughtful men;
And the kind sister whose glad mirth
Was like a sunshine on the earth —
These come back to the soul supine,
Flower of the Spring, at look of thine,
And thou, among the dimmed and gone,
Art an unaltered thing alone!

Unchanged — unchanged! — the very flower
That grew in Eden droopingly —
And now beside the peasant's door
Awakes his little children's glee,
Even as it filled his heart with joy
Beside his mother's door, a boy! —
The same — and to his heart it brings
The freshness of those vanished springs!
Bloom, then, fair flower, in sun and shade,
For deep thought in thy cup is laid;
And careless children, in their glee,
A sacred memory make of thee!

A POETICAL LETTER.

TO MASTER BENJAMIN ————.

Broom Hall, June 7th.

MY DEAR COUSIN BEN,

With infinite pleasure this letter I pen,
To beg you will come, like a very good friend,
Six days of delight in the country to spend.
Pray ask your papa, and on Monday I'll wait
(You can come by the Nelson) beside the park-gate;
And — there's a good fellow — bring with you your bow,
And your new bat and ball; — if the reason you'd know,
I can tell you, because there's great work to be done, —
At shooting and cricket a match to be won;
And to make it a pleasure the less to be slighted,
Eight other young gentlemen have been invited.
Their names are as follow — all promise they'll come —
First, merry Tom Wilmot; we call him Tom Thumb;

The two master Nortons, and witty Dick Hall,
And clever George Nugent, so famous at ball;
Ned Stevens the sailor, and gay Herman Blair,
And lastly Frank Thurlow, the great cricket-player.
And now, if you'll count them, you'll find there are ten;
So come, as I pray you, my dear cousin Ben.
And to give you some notion of how we're to spend
These six days of triumph, dear cousin, attend; —
But first I must tell you papa is so good
As to lend, for our service, the lodge in the wood;
He has had it repaired, and from Cornwall to Fife,
You ne'er saw such a snug little place in your life;
With a low, rustic roof, and a curious old door,
With a dozen straw chairs, and new mats on the floor:
And there we're to live, jovial fellows, indeed,
With good store of poultry and fruit for our need;
And there the old housekeeper, blithe Mrs. Hay,
Is to cook us a capital dinner each day;
And mamma has provided us dainties enow, —
Tarts, jellies, and custards, and syllabubs too!
So come, my dear fellow, and with us partake
These six days of triumph — fine sport we shall make!
And now I'll go on telling what's to be done: —
Imprimis, on Monday begins all the fun;
All ready in order the guests will arrive —
Half-a-score of the merriest fellows alive!

Then on Tuesday we all must be up with the dawn,
For a great match of cricket we have on the lawn;
The prize will be hung up aloft on a tree, —
A new bat and ball, — as complete as can be.
On Wednesday, a pleasant excursion we make,
Each equipped *à la Walton*, to fish in the lake;
And all that we catch, whether minnow or whale,
Will be cooked for our supper, that night, without fail.
On the morning of Thursday, gay archers are we;
The target is ready, nailed up on a tree;
And the prize — such a bow and such arrows! — my word,
But the twang of that bow fifty yards may be heard!
And the king of all archers, even bold Robin Hood,
Had been proud of such arrows to speed through the wood.
That over, dear cousin, we all must be dressed —
'Tis my sister Bell's birth-day — quite spruce, in our best;
Dancing shoes on his feet, *à la mode*, very fine,
And mamma has invited us that day to dine;
And Bell has invited nine friends of her own —
Just a partner apiece — they are all to you known;
Miss Paget, Miss Ellis, Miss White, and the rest,
And that beautiful dancer, the pretty Miss West:
But I won't stop to tell you the names of them all;
But the archery victor will open the ball.

On Friday, betimes, has been fixed for our going
Five miles down the river, a grand match of rowing.
Two boats are got ready, and moored in our view,
And each is as light as an Indian canoe;
The Sylph and the Swallow — the loveliest things
That e'er skimmed the water, dear Ben, without wings!
And, lest that the water our boats should o'erwhelm,
Papa and my uncle will each take a helm;
And my uncle, you know, an old sailor has been,
And papa's the best helmsman that ever was seen.
So tell your mamma there's no danger at all, —
We shall not be o'erset or by shallow or squall.
The prize for that day has not yet been decided,
But before it is wanted it will be provided.
On Saturday, Ben, is a great day of sorrow;
'Twill half spoil the rowing to have such a morrow;
But papa has determined that morning to spend
In chemical wonders that scarce have an end —
Among waters and fires, and vapors and smoke —
On my word, cousin Ben, how you'll laugh at the joke!
And a lunch will be ready at one — and what then?
Why, each one must go to his home back again

So good-by, my dear cousin; be sure and come down
By the Nelson on Monday — the fare is a crown —

And more than a crown's worth of pleasure you'll
get —
And the lodge in the forest you'll never forget.
Papa, and mamma, and my sister, unite
In love to my aunt and my uncle. — Good night!
And believe me, dear fellow,
As true as can be,
Yours, anxiously waiting,
J. W. C

[MEMORANDUM.] *June 18th.*

I went down to Broom Hall, according to my cousin's invitation, by the Nelson. My cousin, and three young gentlemen who lived near, and had ridden over on ponies, were waiting for me at the park-gate, — it was then eleven o'clock. By three, all had arrived. The weather was very fine; the lodge in the forest, one of the sweetest, most picturesque places I ever saw; and Mrs. Hay was in a good humor all the time, though I am sure we gave her a great deal of trouble; — I have bought two yards of green satin riband for Mrs. Hay's cap, which I shall send by Thomas this afternoon; but now to go on with the six days. The matches were kept up with a deal of spirit. Frank Thurlow, as every body expected, won at cricket. I — I am proud to say — got the bow and arrows — the finest things that ever were seen! and they

have won me, since then, the prize-arrow at Lady ——'s archery meeting. The prize for rowing was gained by the young gentlemen of the Sylph, and was a set of models of the progress of ship-building, from the Egyptian raft of reeds, up to an English man-of-war. The young gentlemen of the Sylph drew for it, and it fell by lot to George Nugent; and with this every one was satisfied; for he is a general favorite.

All this I would have told in rhyme, that it might have matched my cousin's letter; but I am a bad hand at verse-making.

BEN.

ALICE FLEMING.

They sate upon the green hill-side,
Sweet Alice Fleming and her brother;
"Now tell me, Alice," said the youth,
"And tell me in sincerest truth,—
Thy thoughts no longer smother,—

"Wherefore I should not go to sea?
Dost fear that evil will befall—
Dost think I surely must be drowned,
Or that our ship will run aground,
And each wind blow a squall?

"Dear Alice, be not faint of heart;
Thou need'st not have a fear for me:
I know we're orphans — but despite
Our homely lot, in God's good sight,
I'll be a father unto thee!

"Cheer up, cheer up! the ship is stout;
A well-built ship and beautiful;—
I know the crew, all brave and kind
As e'er spread canvass to the wind—
'The Adventure,' bound from Hull;—

" A whaler to the northern seas;
And think, what joy to meet again!
Dear Alice, when we next sit here,
Thou'lt laugh at every idle fear,—
Wilt know all fear is idle then.

" Three voyages I'll only take,
As a poor ship-boy — thou shalt see
So well the seaman's craft I'll learn,
That not a man, from stem to stern,
But shall be proud of me!

" Ay, Alice, and some time or other,
I'll have a ship, — nay, it is true,
Though thou mayst smile; and for thy sake
I'll call it by thy name, and make
A fortune for us two."

The boy went to the sea, and Alice
In a sweet dale, by Simmer Water,
Where dwelled her parents, there dwelt she
With a poor peasant's family,
And was among them as a daughter.

Each day she did her household part,
Singing like some light-hearted bird;
Or sate upon the lonely fells
Whole days among the heather-bells,
To keep the peasant's little herd.

Poor Alice, she was kind and good;
  Yet oft upon the mountains lone
Her heart was sad, and 'mong the sheep,
When no eye saw her, she would weep
  For many sorrows of her own.

Sweet maiden — and she yet must weep;
  Her brother meantime far away
Sailed in that ship so stout and good,
With hopeful spirit unsubdued,
  Beyond the farthest northern bay.

The voyage was good; his heart was light;
  He loved the sea, — and now once more
He sailed upon another trip
With the same captain, the same ship,
  In the glad spring, for Elsinore.

Again, unto the Bothnian Gulf —
  But 'twas a voyage of wreck and sorrow;
The captain died upon the shore
Where he was cast, and twenty more
  Were left among the rocks of Snorro.

The boy was picked up by a boat
  Belonging to a Danish ship;
And as they touched at Riga Bay,
They left him there — for what could they
  Do with a sick boy on the deep?

And there within a hospital
Fevered he lay, and, worn and weak,
Bowed with great pain, a stranger lad,
Who not a friend to soothe him had,
And not a word of Russ could speak.

Amid that solitude and pain,
He begged some paper, and he wrote
To Alice; 'twas a letter long;
But then he used his English tongue,
And every sorrow he poured out.

Poor Alice! did she weep? — ah, yes,
She wept, indeed, one live-long day;
But then her heart was strong and true;
And calmly thus she spoke: "I too
Will go to Riga Bay!"

"To that wild place!" the people said,
"Where none can English understand?
O! go not there — depend upon't,
He's dead ere now — he does not want
Your aid — leave not your native land!"

'Twas vain; each word they spoke was vain;
She took with her the little store
Left at her father's dying day,
And for the Baltic sailed away:
Such steadfast love that maiden bore!

Is this the boy, so stout and bold,
That on the green hill sate with her?
Is this the brother, blithe of cheer,
The careless heart without a fear?
Is this the joyful mariner?

The same — for in that hospital
There is no English boy but he —
The same — the very same, none other
Sweet Alice Fleming than thy brother —
And well he knoweth thee!

Ay, though the boy, with suffering bowed,
Was changed indeed, and feeble grown,
Better to him than oil and wine,
Better by far than doctors nine,
Was his kind sister's cheering tone.

And soon 'twas told through Riga town
What love an English sister bore
Her brother — how she left her home
Among the mountains, and had come
To tend him on this distant shore.

And she a maiden scarce sixteen! —
'Twas a sweet tale of tenderness,
That all were happy to repeat;
The women, passing in the street,
Spoke of it, and they spoke to bless.

So did the merchants on the quay;
  So did all people, old and young;
And when into the street she went,
All looked a kindly sentiment,
  And blessed her in their Russian tongue.

But now the youth grew strong and stout,
  And as he to the sea was bent,
And ne'er in toil or danger quailed,
So, light of heart and proud, he sailed
  Mate of a ship from Riga sent.

Its owner was Paul Carlowitz,
  A merchant, and of Russian birth,
As rich as Crœsus; and this same,
Despite his ships, and wealth, and name, —
For of an ancient line he came, —
  Loved Alice Fleming for her worth.

He was no merchant old and gruff,
  Sitting 'mong money-bags in state;
Not he! — a handsome man, and kind
As you in any land would find,
  Or choose for any maiden's mate.

And if you sail to Riga town,
  You'll find it true, upon my life;
And any child will show you where
Lives Carlowitz, who took the fair
  Poor English maiden for his wife.

ONE OF THE VANITIES OF HUMAN WISHES.

PUER LOQUITUR.

I WISH that I myself had lived
In the ages that are gone,
Like a brother of the Wandering Jew —
And yet kept living on; —

For then, in its early glory,
I could have proudly paced
The City of the Wilderness,
Old Tadmor of the Waste; —

And have seen the Queen of Sheba,
With her camels riding on,
With spiceries rich and precious stones,
To great King Solomon: —

And all the ivory palaces,
With floors of beaten gold;
And in the green, fair gardens walked
Of Babylon the old; —

And have talked with gray Phœnicians
Of dark and solemn seas,
And heard the wild and dismal tales
Of their far voyages

I could have solved all mysteries
Of Egypt old and vast,
And read each hieroglyphic scroll
From the first word to the last.

I should have known what cities
In the desert wastes were hid;
And have walked, as in my father's house
Through each great pyramid.

I might have sate on Homer's knees,
A little, prattling boy,
Hearing all he knew of Grecian tales
And the bloody work at Troy.

I should have seen fair Athens,
The immortal and the free,
O'erlooking, with her marble walls,
The islands and the sea.

I should have seen each Naiad
That haunted rock and stream;
And walked, with wisest Plato,
In the groves of Academe.

I should have seen old Phidias,
Hewing his marble stone;
And every grave tragedian,
And every poet known.

Think what a Cicerone
I should have been, to trace
The city of the Seven Hills
Who had known its ancient race; —

Had stood by warlike Romulus
In council and in fray,
And with his horde of robbers dwelt
In reed-roofed huts of clay!

Think but of Julius Cæsar,
The heroic, wise, and brave;
To have seen his legions in the field,
His galleys on the wave; —

Then, to have sate in the Forum,
When Cicero's words grew strong;
Or at evening by the Tiber walked,
To listen Virgil's song!

I should have seen Rome's glory dimmed
When, round her leaguered wall,
Came down the Vandal and the Goth,
The Scythian and the Gaul; —

And the dwarfish Huns by myriads,
From the unknown northern shores;
As if the very earth gave up
The brown-men of the moors.

I should have seen Old Wodin
And his seven sons go forth
From the green banks of the Caspian Sea
To the dim wilds of the north; —

To the dark and piny forests,
Where he made his drear abode,
And taught his wild and fearful faith,
And thus became their god.

And the terrible Vikingr,
Dwellers on the stormy sea,
The Norsemen and their Runic lore,
Had all been known to me!

Think only of the dismal tales,
Of the mysteries I should know,
If my long life had but begun
Three thousand years ago!

THE GARDEN.

Nay, go not to the town to-day;
The fierceness of this noon-tide ray,
Like furnace-fire, will hotly fall,
Reflected from each red brick wall;
And the smooth pavement of the street
Will seem to scorch thy passing feet;
And in the crush, and in the crowd
Of busy men, with voices loud,
Mingle not thou! but turn aside,
And let me be this day thy guide;
Come to the garden! Let us pass
Adown this smoothly-shaven grass;
Soft, cool, and as a carpet laid
For the fair foot of Eastern maid.
Here cannot come the scorching heat
Of noonday to thy cool retreat:
The shadow of a broad plane-tree
Is o'er thee like a canopy;
And, just anigh, within thine ear,
The tinkle of a fountain clear,
Within a marble basin falling;
  And 'mong the shrouding leaves is heard
  The song of many an unseen bird;
And near and far the cuckoo calling! —

And here come odors that the breeze
Brings from the scented flowering trees;
Rich scent that gives the fancy flight
To Eastern gardens of delight;
And say, whatever bower of bliss
Was fairer in romance than this? —
Romance! — ay, sure, and we will find
Some tale for this sweet spot designed,
Some ancient tale of woe and wonder,
Made to be read the blue sky under —
Made to be read when thoughts are free;
  Some tale of fancy, fresh and airy,
Of beautiful dwellers in the sea,
  Or gambols of the summer faëry!

Now scorching noon is passed, and closed
The book on which our thoughts reposed —
That pleasant book of fairy-wonder,
Made to be read the blue skies under.
Now let us take a wider range;
The garden has unceasing change;
And in this sunset's golden tide,
See how the flowers are beautified!
Sweet flowers, — sweet, radiant flowers that we
Regard as visible poetry —
The flowers of Greece, the flowers of Spain,
Of islands in the Southern main;
Of sunny Persia; far Cathay,
And the lion-realms of Africa —

How do they send the fancy forth,
  As if she had a ship to speed her
To the far corners of the earth,
  Where'er a vagrant thought can lead her!
Where'er there is a breath of flowers,
That far-off, pleasant land is ours!

  Now, in these walks of verdant shade
Which arching evergreens have made,
Let thee and me, with minds sedate,
Watch till the evening groweth late;
For holy is that serious thought
Which by the coming night is brought;
For then doth spiritual life unfold,
  As flowers in day-light open wide;
And God's good spirit, as of old,
  Seems to walk here at eventide!

SONG FOR THE BALL-PLAYERS.

Up goes the ball with might and main,
And soon it cometh down again;
Ups and downs, I've heard them say
For many a year, is the world's way!

Up goes the ball, — like a goblet-cup;
Hold your hand as you send it up!
Down it comes, — ere it reach the ground,
Catch the ball so firm and round!

An up and a down, that is the way,
With a good round ball, that you must play;
Up, high as you can, then down again,
Five and five, and a double ten.

The world is a ball, and every star,
And the sun himself, great balls they are;
Round they go, and round about,
Ever and ever, yet ne'er are out!

Up goes the ball! O, if I threw
Up to the very sky so blue,
Up to the moon, or to Charles's Wain,
'Twould be long ere the ball came down again!

An up and down, that is the way,
With a good round ball, that you must play;
Up, high as you can, and down again,
Ten and ten, and six times ten!

Face to the shade, and back to the shine;
Send up your balls with a toss like mine,
Straight as a dart, as if 'twere cast
From the spring of a mighty arbalast!

There it goes! Good luck to the ball!
Here it comes, with a plumping fall!
How merry it is, our balls to throw,
Standing together thus in a row!

An up and a down, that is the way,
With a good round ball, that you must play;
Up, high as you can, and down again;
Now we have counted ten times ten.

THE KITTEN'S MISHAP.

I'LL tell you a tale of a watery disaster;
Of a cat, and a kitten, and their little master;
A tale it shall be, neither made-up nor silly,
Of two good little children, named Peggy and Willy.
They were not rich children, and clever, like you,
Who had books, toys, and pictures, and nothing to do;
They were two little orphans, that lived on a common,
In a very small house, with a very old woman;
A very old woman, as poor as could be;
And they worked for the bread that they eat, all three.
The old woman was feeble, rheumatic, and thin,
And with very great labor she managed to spin;
And all the day long, with unwearying zeal,
From Monday to Saturday round went her wheel;
Yet with all her turning, she scarce could contrive
To earn the small pittance that kept her alive;
So these good little children they both did their best,
And gave from their earnings what made up the rest.

Of wealth, which so many consider a blessing,
The three nothing knew — yet the joy of possessing,
Even in this poor cottage, the inmates could share,
For the dame had her wheel, and her table and chair;
But Peggy and Willy, than these had far more;
For hers was the blackbird, that hung at the door,
The sweet singing blackbird, that filled with delight
Of its music the cottage, from morning to night;
And his was the cat that slept under his bed,
And never looked famished, howe'er it was fed.

Now, the tale that I had in my mind to rehearse,
Was related by Willy, though not told in verse:
Said Willy, "The cat had a kitten that lay
Behind my bed's head, on a cushion of hay;
A beautiful kit, though a mischievous elf,
And given to prowling about by itself.
Now it happened, one day, as I came from my work,
Before I had put by my rake and my fork,
The old cat came up, and she pawed and she mewed,
With the wofulest visage that ever I viewed,
And she showed me the door, and she ran in and out;
I couldn't conceive what the cat was about!
At length, I bethought that the creature was good,
And she should have her way, let it be what it would;

And no sooner she saw me inclined to obey,
Than she set up her tail, and she scampered away
To a pond not far off, where the kitten I found
In a bottomless basket, just sinking, half drowned—
However it got there, I never could tell,
For a cat hates the water — but so it befell;
Perhaps some bad boy this bad action had done,
To torture the kitten, and then call it fun;
Yet that I don't know; but I soon got her out,
And a terrible fright she had had, there's no doubt;
'Twas a pitiful object; it drooped down its head,
And Peggy for some time declared it was dead.
But its heart was alive, spite the panic and pain,
And it opened its eyes, and looked up again;
And we gave it some milk, and we dried its wet fur;
And O! what a pleasure there was in its purr!
At length, when we saw that all danger was over,
And that, well warmed and dried, it began to recover,
We laid it in bed, on its cushion of hay,
And wrapped it up snugly, and bade it 'Good day.'
And then its poor mother gave over her mourning,
And lay down and purred, like the wheel that was turning;
And she and the kitten, by care unperplexed,
Slept, purred, and scarce stirred all that day and the next;
Then scarcely a trace of her trouble she bore,
Though meeker and graver than ever before."
So here ends my tale of this watery disaster,
Of the cat and the kitten, and their little master.

SPRING.

APRIL.

Spring! the beautiful Spring is coming;
The sun shines bright, and the bees are humming;
And the fields are rich with the early flowers,
  Beds of crocus and daisies white;
And under the budding hedge-row, showers
  Of the ficary golden bright!
Come, come, let you and me
Go out and the promise of Spring-time see,
For many a pleasant nook I know,
Where the hooded arum and blue-bell grow,
And crowds of violets white as snow;—
    Come, come, let's go!
    Let's go, for hark,
    I hear the lark;
And the blackbird and thrush on the hill-side tree,
Shout to each other so merrily!
    And the wren sings loud,
    And a little crowd
Of gnats in the sun dance cheerily.
Come, come! come along with me,

For the tassels are red on the tall larch tree,
And in homesteads hilly,
The spathed daffodilly
Is growing in beauty for me and thee!

MAY.

'Tis spring! 'tis Spring! all creatures know it;
The skies, the earth, the waters show it;
The freckled snakes come out i' the sun;
The leverets race in the meadows green;
The sleep of the little dormouse is done,
And the frisking squirrel again is seen!
Come, come who will,
Let us take our fill
Of delight in the valley, the field, the hill;
Let us go to the wood that so late was still;
The air is ringing
With singing, singing!
And flowers are springing
The lanes along,
The white and the red,
And the umbelled head,
And the single-blowing,
All thickly growing,
This merry May morn, a thousand strong!
The fishes are glad this May morning,
And like things of light
Through the waters bright,

Flash to and fro!
There's a sound of joy in the youthful Spring —
Hark! hark!
There sings the lark!
Why tarry we yet? let's go!
The strong lamb boundeth,
The glad foal neighs;
And joy resoundeth
A thousand ways —
Over hill, and valley, and wood, and plain,
Joy poureth down like a shower of rain!
I'll tarry no more! come, come, let's go!

LIFE AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

The splintered, northern mountains lay
  All round about my mother's dwelling,
All full of craggy hollows gray,
  Where ice-cold, sparkling streams were welling.

Upon the mountains lay the snow,
  Far gleaming snows that melted never;
And deeply, darkly, far below,
  Went sounding on, a lonely river.

Upon the mountain summits hung
  The tempest-clouds so darkly scowling,
And winds in caverned hollows sung,
  Like unto desert creatures howling.

Day after day the sunshine slept,
  Night after night the moon was hidden;
And rain and wind about us kept,
  Week after week, like guests unbidden.

And many a time the deep snows fell,
  In the dark months of winter weather;
And quite shut in our mountain dell,
  We, and our lonely flock together.

We had a little flock of sheep;
I herded them both night and morning;
My mother in the house did keep
Her busy wheel forever turning.

What joy it was, as I brought them round,
Into their pen, at nightfall darkling,
To hear that old wheel's droning sound,
And see the cheerful wood-fire sparkling!

On stilly eves, beside my flock,
The sounds I heard will haunt me ever;
The eagle rising from the rock,
The wind-borne roaring of the river;—

The gathering of the coming storm,
Like far-off angry giants talking;
The gray mist, like a ghostly form,
Over the ridgy mountain stalking!

I saw, I heard, I loved them all;
My days and nights were never weary,
Though many a passing guest would call
My life forlorn, those mountains dreary.

Would I were back among the hills,
Could see the heath and scent the gowan;
Would I could hear those sounding rills,
And sit beneath the lonely rowan!

But our little flock of sheep are gone,
Like snowy clouds in moonlight flying;
And my mother lies 'neath the church-yard stone,
With long, dry bent-grass round her sighing!

PILGRIMS.

With hoary hair, and bent with age,
He goes forth on his pilgrimage,
An old man from his forest-cell,
With sandalled feet, and scallop shell;
His sight is dim, his steps are slow,
And pain and hardship must he know,
An old, way-faring man, alone,
And yet his spirit bears him on.
For what? the holy place to see;
To kneel upon Mount Calvary,
Golgotha's dreary bound to trace,
To traverse every desert place,
In which the Savior trod of yore;
For this he beareth travel sore,
Hunger, and weariness, and pain,
Nor longeth for his home again!

Now see another pilgrim, gay,
And heartsome as a morn in May;
Young, beautiful, and brave, and strong,
As a wild stag he bounds along:
Mountains his path may not impede;
The winds and waters serve his need.
He is a pilgrim bound to see
All the old lands of poesy;

At antique cross and altar-stone,
And where dim pagan rites were done;
In groves; by springs; on mountains hoar;
In classic vale; by classic shore;
Where wise men walked; where brave men fell;
Or tale of love hath left its spell,
It matters not — his foot is there,
Joyful to breathe of classic air;
Joyful on classic forms to gaze,
And call back light from ancient days. —
It is a fond and ardent quest,
And leaves its pilgrim ill at rest!
Behold, once more! — From youth to age
Man goeth on a pilgrimage;
Or rich or poor, unwise or wise,
Before each one this journey lies;
'Tis to a land afar, unknown,
Yet where the great of old are gone,
Poet and patriot, sage and seer;
All whom we worship or revere
This awful pilgrimage have made, —
Have passed to the dim land of shade.
Youth, with his radiant locks, is there;
And old men with their silver hair;
And children sportive in their glee; —
A strange and countless company!
Ne'er on that land gazed human eyes;
Man's science hath not traced its skies;
Nor mortal traveller e'er brought back
Chart of that journey's fearful track.

Thou art a pilgrim to that shore, —
Like them, thou canst return no more!
O, gird thee, for thou needest strength
For the way's peril as its length!
O, faint not by the way, nor heed
Dangers nor lures, nor check thy speed;
So God be with thee, pilgrim blessed;
Thou journeyest to the LAND OF REST!

COWSLIPS.

Nay, tell me not of Austral flowers,
Or purple bells from Persia's bowers
The cowslip of this land of ours
Is dearer far to me!
This flower in other years I knew!
I knew the fields wherein it grew,
With violets white and violets blue,
Beneath the garden-tree!

I never see these flowers but they
Send back my memory far away,
To years long past, and many a day
Else perished long ago!
They bring my childhood's years again—
Our garden-fence, I see it plain,
With ficaries like a golden rain
Showered on the earth below.

A happy child, I leap, I run,
And memories come back, one by one,
Like swallows with the summer sun,
To their old haunts of joy!

A happy child, once more I stand,
With my kind sister, hand in hand,
And hear those tones so sweet, so bland,
That never brought annoy!

I hear again my mother's wheel;
Her hand upon my head I feel;
Her kiss, which every grief could heal,
Is on my cheek even now;
I see the dial overhead;
I see the porch o'er which was led
The pyracantha green and red,
And jessamine's slender bough

I see the garden-thicket's shade,
Where all the summer long we played,
And gardens set, and houses made,
Our early work and late;
Our little gardens, side by side,
Each bordered round with London-pride,
Some six feet long and three feet wide,
To us a large estate!

The apple and the damson trees;
The cottage-shelter for our bees;
I see them — and beyond all these,
A something dearer still;
I see an eye serenely blue,
A cheek of girlhood's freshest hue,
A buoyant heart, a spirit true,
Alike in good and ill.

Sweet sister, thou wert all to me,
And I, sufficient friend for thee;—
Where was a happier twain than we,
Who had no mate beside?
Like wayside flowers in merry May,
Our pleasures round about us lay;—
A joyful morning had our day,
Whate'er our eve betide!

THE INDIAN BIRD.

A MAIDEN had an Indian bird,
And she kept it in her bower;
The sweetest bird that e'er was seen, —
Its feathers were of the light sea-green,
And its eye had a mild intelligence,
As if it were gifted with human sense:
In the English tongue it had no name,
But a gentle thing it was, and tame,
And at the maiden's call it came:
And thus it sung one twilight hour,
In a wild tone, so sweet and low,
As made a luxury of woe.

"The nest was made of the silver moss,
And was built in the nutmeg-tree,
Far in an ancient forest shade,
That sprung when the very world was made,
In an Indian isle beyond the sea.

"There were four of us in the little nest,
And under our mother's wings we lay;
And the father, the nutmeg-leaves among,
To the rising moon he sat and sung —
For he sung both night and day.

"And, O, he sung so sweetly,
The very winds were hushed!
And the elephant-hunters all drew near,
In joy that wondrous song to hear,
That like wild waters gushed.

"And the little creatures of the wood
To hear it had a great delight,
All but the wild wolf-cat, that prowls
To seek his prey at night.

"The wild wolf-cat of the mountains old,
He stole to that tree of ours —
All silently he stole at night,
Like the green snake 'mong the flowers.

"His eyes were like two dismal fires;
His back was dusky gray;
And he seized our father while he sung,
Then bounded with him away!

"Wild was the cry the father gave,
Till the midnight forest rang;
And 'O!' said the kindly hunters then,
'Some savage creature, from its den,
Hath pounced upon that gentle bird,
And seized it as it sang!'

"All wearily passed that woful night
With our poor mother's wail;

And we watched, from out our little nest,
The great round moon go down to rest,
And the little stars grow pale.

"And then I felt our mother's heart
Flutter, as in a wild surprise;
And we saw from a leafy bough above,
The basilisk-snake, with its stony eyes.

"It lay on the bough like a bamboo rod,
All freckled and barred with green and brown;
And the terrible light of its freezing eyes
Through the nutmeg-boughs came down.

"And lithely towards the little nest
It slid, and nearer it drew;
And its poisonous breath, like a stifling cloud,
'Mong the nutmeg-leaves it threw.

"Ah me! and I felt our mother's heart,
As it beat in an awful fear,
And she gave a cry that any beast
But the basilisk-snake had been woe to hear.

"But he spared her not for her beautiful wings;
He spared her not for her cry;
And the silence of death came down on the woods,
That had rung with her agony.

"And there we lay, four lonely ones!
That live-long day, and pined and pined;
And dismally through the forest-trees
Went by the moaning wind.

"We watched the dreary stars come out,
And the pitiless moon come up the sky,
And many a dreadful sound we heard —
The serpent's hiss and the jackal's cry;
And then a hush of downy wings
The nutmeg-tree went by.

"And ever and ever that dreamy sound,
For a long, long hour we heard;
And then the eyes so terrible,
And the hooked beak, — we knew them well, —
Of the cruel dragon-bird!

"We were his prey; and then there came
In the light of the morning sun,
The giant eagle from the rock;
He swooped on the nest with a heavy shock,
And left but me, the lonely one!

"O, sorrow comes to the feeble thing,
And I was feeble as could be!
And next the arrowy lightning came,
And smote our nutmeg-tree.

"Down went the tree; down went the nest;
And I had soon been dead of cold,

But that a Bramin, passing by,
Beheld me with his kindly eye:
He bore me thence, and for a space
He kept me in a holy place,
Within a little cage of gold.

"The Bramin's daughter tended me,
A gentle maid and beautiful;
And all day long to me she sung,
And all around my cage she hung
The large white-lily fresh and cool.

"And so I lived, — in joy I lived;
And when my wings were strong,
She placed me in a banyan-tree,
Of her sweet will to set me free,
For the Bramin doth no creature wrong.

"But I could not leave that kind old man;
I could not leave that maiden bright;
And so my little nest I built
Beneath their temple's roof, and dwelt
Among sweet flowers and all fair things,
The Indian people's offerings;
And me she called her 'soul's delight,'
In that land's speech a loving name;
And thenceforth it my name became.

"But bloody war was in the land;
The old man and the maid were slain;

The precious things were borne away —
A ruined heap the temple lay,
And I among the spoil was ta'en.

" They said I was an idol bird,
That I had been enshrined there,
And that the people worshipped me,
And that my gentle maiden fair
Was priestess to the sea-green bird !
'Twas false ! — yet thus they all averred ;
And in the city I was sold
For a great price in counted gold.
Thy merchant-father purchased me,
And I was borne across the sea ;
Thou know'st the rest — I am not sad ;
With thee, sweet maiden, all are glad ! "

THE CHILDREN'S WISH.

O FOR an old, gray traveller,
By our winter fire to be,
To tell us of each foreign shore,
Of sunny seas and mountains hoar,
Which we can never see! —

To tell us of those regions stern,
Covered with frost and snow,
Where not the hardy fir can bear
The bitter cold of that northern air, —
'Mong the dwarfish Esquimaux! —

Or where, on the high and snowy ridge
Of the Dofrine mountains cold,
The patient rein-deer draws the sledge,
With rattling hoofs, along the ledge
Of mountains wild and old!

Or, if that ancient traveller
Had gone o'er the hills of Spain,
Of other scenes he would proudly speak,
Than icy seas and mountains bleak;
And a weary way of pain.

He would tell of green and sunny vales,
Thick woods and waters clear,
Of singing birds, and summer skies,
And peasant girls with merry eyes,
And the dark-browed muleteer!

Or, think if he had been at Rome,
And in St. Peter's stood,
And seen each venerable place,
Built when the old, heroic race
Of Rome was great and good!—

And more, if he had voyaged o'er
The bright, blue Grecian sea,
'Mong isles where the white-lily grows,
And the gum-cistus and the rose,
The bay and olive tree!—

And had felt on old Parnassus' top
The pleasant breezes blow;
In Athens dwelt a long, long time,
And noted all of that fair clime,
Which we so long to know;—

And then, as he grew old and wise,
He should go to Palestine,
And in the Holy City dwell,
Till, like his home, he knew it well,
With the Bible, line by line;—

He should have stood on Lebanon,
Beneath the cedar's shade;
And, with a meek and holy heart,
On the Mount of Olives sate apart,
And by the Jordan strayed;—

And have travelled on where Babylon
Lay like a desert heap,
Where the pale hyacinth grows alone,
And where beneath the ruined stone
The bright, green lizards creep!

And if, the great world round about,
Through flowery Hindostan;
To the Western World; to the Southern Cape,
Where dwell the zebra and the ape,
Had gone this pleasant man,—

What tales he would tell on winter nights!
Of Indian hunters grim,
As they sit in the pine-bark wigwam's bound,
While the hungry wolf is barking round,
In the midnight forest dim;—

Or how they meet by the council fire,
Wearing the hen-hawk's feather,
To hear some famous Sagum's "talk,"
To see them bury the tomahawk,
And smoke the pipe together;—

Or of the bloody Indian wars,
When 'neath each forest-tree
Was done some fell deed of affright,
And the war-whoop rang at dead of night,
Through the wild woods dismally.

He would tell of dim and savage coasts;
Of shipwrecks dark and dread;
Of coral reefs in sleeping seas;
Of bright isles of the Hesperides—
And more than we have read!

And O that such old man were here,
With his wise and travelled look,
With thought, like deep, exhaustless springs;
And a memory full of wondrous things,
Like a glorious picture-book!

THE ENGLISH MOTHER.

An English matron sate at eve
  Beneath the stately tree
That grew before her husband's hall,
  With her young son at her knee:
All green and ancient were the woods
  That grew around their home,
And old and quaint armorial stones
  Adorned their stately dome;
And 'mid dark trees, a little church
  Its holy form displayed,
Within whose deep and quiet vaults
  Their noble dead were laid.
The boy turned up his eager eyes
  To his mother, as she told
Of the proud race from whom he sprung,
  And their achievements old.
"My son, the legend of our house
  Is, simply, 'Trust in God;'
And none unworthy of such trust
  Within its halls have trod.
The blood of thy heroic line
  Has reddened many a field;
And trophies of the fights they won
  Are blazoned on thy shield:

The banners which they bore away,
  All soiled, and torn, and red,
Are mouldering in yon holy pile,
  Above the warrior dead;
And many an ancient coat of mail,
  And plumed helm and sword,
All proved in some heroic cause,
  Within thy home are stored.
Thou bear'st the noble name they bore;
  Their blood is in thy veins;
And much thy worthy sires have done;
  But more for thee remains.
They shrunk not in the dreadful hour
  Of persecution's scathe,
And some 'mid bonds, and some 'mid fire,
  Maintained their righteous faith.
Thou must not shrink, thou must not fear,
  Nor e'er belie their trust,
For God, who brought the mighty low,
  He raised them from the dust.
And in our dangerous hour of pride,
  When honors gird us round,
Alas! the boasted strength of man
  Is often weakest found;
And they who put their trust in Heaven,
  'Mid darkness and dismay,
Too soon forget the God they sought,
  When fear has passed away.
The hour of chiefest danger now
  Is nigh — so Heaven thee guide! —

Prosperity will try thee, boy,
As ne'er thy sires were tried!—
And O! unworthy of thy sires,
Not here couldst thou find rest;
Thou mightst not stand beneath these trees,
Were thine a guilty breast;
These ancient walls, yon holy fane,
This green and stately tree,
Couldst thou disgrace thy noble name,
Would speak reproach to thee!"

Again the boy looked in her face,
His bright eyes dimmed with tears,
And "Not unworthy of my sires
Shall be my manhood years!"
Said he, in a proud, but artless tone;
And his mother kissed his brow,
And said, "I trust in God that none
Of thy noble sires, in the ages gone,
Had a nobler son than thou!"

THE DEPARTED.

"From the woods and the summer fields he is gone,
With his merry laugh and his sunny brow!
The garden looks dim, and the house is lone;
Where, dearest mother, is he wandering now?"

"He is gone in a brighter home to dwell,
With beautiful creatures all love and joy,
Where death comes not, and no sad farewell
With its parting tone can his bliss annoy.
He is gone to a happier home than ours,
Beneath the light of more radiant skies,
And his path is bright with more lovely flowers
Than in the sweet summer e'er met thine eyes.

"Thou wilt meet him no more in the fields of earth,
For the pleasant days of his life are o'er,
And the joyful peals of his laughing mirth
Will ring from our evening hearth no more.
Thou wilt see him no more as he used to be;
Thou wilt sleep by his side no more at night;
Nor with thee again will he bend the knee,
And his evening-prayer with thine unite!"

"Mother, his cheeks are cold and pale;
His eyes are closed, yet he does not sleep,
For he wakens not at my earnest call;—
Is it death, dear mother, — that rest so deep?"

"My child, his sleep is the sleep of death;
Yet we may not deem it a darkened lot,
And his spirit, more pure than the breezes' breath,
May be wandering near, though we know it not!
And wish him not back, thou lonely child,
Though we miss his love, and his pleasant voice,—
Thou wilt soon to thy loss be reconciled,
And again in the summer-woods rejoice.

"He dwells where the fields can never fade,
Where night comes not, nor day is dim;
Where the glory of God is the sun, and the shade
Is the shadowing wing of the cherubim.
And, O! in yon bright and happy land,
Thou again mayst his sunny beauty see,
And hear his voice, 'mid a joyful band,
From the shades of death as it welcomes thee!"

A POETICAL CHAPTER ON TAILS.

One evening three boys did their father assail,
With, "Tell us a tale, papa, tell us a tale!"
"A tale?" said their father; "O yes! you shall see,
That a tale of all tails it this evening shall be;
A tale having reference to all tails whatever,
Of air or of ocean, of field or of river!
First, the tail of a cat, — now this tail can express
All passions, all humors, than language no less."
"O, you're joking, papa," cried at once all the three;
"Yours are tails with an *i*, and not tales with an *e*!"
"Well, well," said their father, "I shall be surprised
If my tails with an *i* in the end are despised;
So, sirs, I'll proceed: Now this tail, as I said,
Expresses what moves her in heart or in head.
Is she pleased — you know it is quiet, no doubt;
Is she angry — you know how she wags it about;
Would she coax you — she rubs, and she purs, and her tail,
With her back at right angles, she lifts like a rail;
Then the tail of a dog, — you need hardly be told,
What tales this same tail of a dog can unfold.

In his joy how he wags it! —from turnspit to hound;
In his trouble, poor rogue, how it droops to the ground!
Then the tails of the horse and the cow, need I say
What useful and excellent fly-flaps are they?
But away! and the hot sandy deserts exploring,
Do you hear how the terrible lion is roaring!
And see in the thicket his fiery eye flashing,
And his furious tail on his tawny sides lashing!
Yes, he is the king of all beasts, and can send
Most marvellous power to his very tail's end.
The same with the tiger — and so of each kind,
The tail is a capital index of mind.
Then the tail of the rattle-snake — should you not fear
Its dry, husky sound in the forest to hear?
Suppose you were sleeping, the tree-roots your bed,
And this terrible monster had crept to your head,
And his tail should awake you, — I'm sure you'd be glad
That a tail with a larum the rattle-snake had.
Apropos of the snake — you've heard, I dare say,
Of the wasp and the hornet, and such things as they;
Of a venomous weapon they carry about,
And moreover, you all know, I make not a doubt,
That 'tis placed in the tail, which same venomous thing
The wise of all nations have christened a sting;

But the tail of a bird for no mischief is sent,
A most scientific and good instrument,
Constructed, indeed, on an excellent plan,
Light, flexible too, and spread out like a fan;
'Tis ballast and rudder, which ill he could spare,
And a buoy to keep up the small creature in air.
Of the ostrich the tail is an elegant thing,
Which is not despised by the mightiest king;
And the handsomest ladies, I often have heard,
Give a monstrous price for the tail of this bird.
Then the sweet bird of Paradise — don't you remember
The beautiful creature we saw last November,
With his banner-like tail, that gracefully spread,
And was seen like a glory encircling his head?
Of that of the peacock no word will I say;
The thing is so common, you see it each day.
And now your attention to change I could wish
To a different tail — even that of a fish;
And no less than the tail of the bird is this made
With wonderful knowledge the creature to aid;
'Tis his helm; and without it no more could he keep,
Than a ship without rudder, his place in the deep;
And the wisest philosophers all have decided,
That no fitter instrument could be provided.
That the shark, my dear boys, has a tail, without doubt,
From some book or other you've long since made out;

And you know how it puts, without hesitation,
The crew of a ship into great consternation,
When he flaps down his tail on the deck; and no wonder,
For, like a sledge-hammer, it falleth in thunder;
And lest that its force 'gainst the ship should prevail,
The first thing they do is to chop off his tail.
Besides there are others,—the monkeys' tail; you
Know well what a monkey with his tail can do.
And have we forgotten the beaver? It yields
The poor, patient creature great help when he builds;
'Tis the wagon he draws his materials upon;
'Tis the trowel to finish his work when 'tis done.
Of the fox, too, in Norway, you've heard, without fail,
How he angles for crabs with his great bushy tail.
And there is the pigtail that gentlemen wore,
With its various fashions, about half a score.
And the great cat-o'-nine tails! that terrible beast
Has made itself famous by its tails, at least.
And the tail of a comet! that tail, in its strength,
Extending some thousands of miles in its length,
Is nothing to laugh at; a most awful thing,
That could sweep down the world with its terrible swing!
And now, since we've conned over bird, beast, and fish,
What greater amusement, my boys, could you wish?

But the next time, however, I think we must try
For some nobler subject than tails with an *i*;
And so, good night to each one, now this the last
line is—
And the book and the chapter shall here have
their

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